

Netanyahu says proposal to pull out from Lebanon 'not a bluff'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Saying he wasn't bluffing about Lebanon, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu proposed Thursday that U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan mediate an end to Israel's presence there.

Mr. Netanyahu said that a peace treaty would be up to Lebanon and that the only prerequisite for an Israeli withdrawal would be a security arrangement which would deploy Lebanese troops in Israel's place.

"We just want to know that

the Lebanese army will take up the positions we vacate in order to ensure that Hizbollah won't target Israeli towns and villages, civilians from the south of Lebanon," Mr. Netanyahu said on CNN.

"It's a very simple and fair proposition and it's not a bluff," the premier said.

Mr. Netanyahu said he would prefer to sit down with the government of Lebanon but was also prepared to handle arrangements through a mediator, adding "we all respect Kofi Annan, let him

come here."

Last month, shortly after Mr. Annan's visit to the region, Israel formally accepted a U.N. Security Council resolution that calls for an Israeli troop withdrawal from south Lebanon.

Israel set up a self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon in 1985 in an effort to prevent cross-border attacks by Hizbollah.

Their efforts have been costly, however, with hundreds of Israeli soldiers killed there fighting Hizbollah, and

responding to public pressure to end Israel's presence there. Mr. Netanyahu offered to pull troops out if proper security arrangements could be made with Lebanon.

Lebanon rejected the deal however, saying it would not hold any talks that left out Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon.

Addressing Lebanese viewers, Mr. Netanyahu said: "We want peace with you. If people want to test out the seriousness of our resolve all they have to do is try me, tomorrow."

CPJ protests Israel's travel ban on Palestinian journalist

AMMAN (J.T.) — In a letter sent last week to the president of Israel's Supreme Court, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the New York-based independent press freedom group, has protested Israel's continued travel restrictions on Palestinian journalist Taher Shritih, according to a CPJ press release.

The Gaza-based free-lance journalist has been denied permission by Israeli authorities since 1995 to travel to Jerusalem and the West Bank to carry out his work as a journalist. The apparent reason for the ban is his coverage of the activities of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Gaza.

Mr. Shritih, a veteran reporter working for The New

York Times, CBS, Reuters, and the British Broadcasting Corporation, filed a petition at the High Court of Justice this week in an attempt to have the restrictions on his freedom of movement lifted, the statement said.

In its letter to Justice Aharon Barak, the CPJ said: "Such extreme limitations on the freedom of movement constitute arbitrary interference with his ability to function fully as a journalist. Mr. Shritih is effectively barred from meeting with current and prospective employers and gathering news and information beyond Gaza."

"Mr. Shritih is widely recognized as one of the most accomplished Palestinian journalists in the West Bank and Gaza. Over the past 11 years,

he has developed a reputation for professionalism and objectivity in his reporting for major international newspapers and news agencies. In recognition of his distinguished and courageous reporting, Mr. Shritih received the Freedom of the Press award from the U.S.-based National Press Club in March 1993.

"Freedom of movement for journalists is essential for the functioning of a free press. Denying Mr. Shritih access to Jerusalem and the West Bank violates the most fundamental right of journalists — the right to 'seek, receive, and impart information and ideas,' as guaranteed by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Six die in Israeli power station accident

ASHKELON (AFP) — Six workers plunged to their death and three others were still missing in a construction site accident at a power station in this Mediterranean port city Friday, electricity company officials said.

Israeli police said earlier that four workers were killed and 13 injured in the accident.

The victims, mainly immigrant workers, fell 100 metres when part of the scaffolding around a chimney under construction collapsed, police said.

An Israeli air force helicopter succeeded in winching to safety three other workers who had been left trapped in the scaffolding about half-way up the 250 metre chimney.

Rescue teams were still looking for three workers who had been working 210 metres above the ground, when the accident took place, the director of Israel's electricity company, Rafi Peled, told Israeli Army Radio.

"The rescue operation is dangerous because the remaining scaffolding is threatening to collapse too," he said.

The radio reported that most of the casualties were immigrant workers from India and Romania.



HIZBOLLAH WITH STATUE OF LIBERTY MODEL: Members of Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hizbollah movement Thursday parade a model of the Statue of Liberty with a sign that reads in Arabic "America is the mother of terrorism in the world" as they take part in an Ashura festival, in which followers mourn the death of Imam Hussein, grandson of Prophet Mohammad. Muslims around the world mourn on the 10th day of the Islamic Muharram month each year to mark Hussein's death (Reuters photo)

Greece tells U.S. no PKK office in Athens

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Greece has told U.S. diplomats that a Kurdish separatist group seeking to secede from Turkey will be barred from opening an office in Athens, the State Department said Thursday.

The Greek government notified the U.S. embassy in Athens after the State Department formally requested information on reports that the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which the United States considers a terrorist group, was poised to establish a presence in Greece.

The PKK announced last week it had obtained the backing of the Greek government to open a bureau in Athens.

"The Greek foreign minister has told our embassy in Athens that there has never

been, is not and ever will be an office of the PKK in Greece," said State Department deputy spokesman James Foley.

"We welcome this pledge which is in keeping with Greece's international commitments on counter-terrorism," Mr. Foley said.

The PKK is fighting for an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey. More than 29,000 people have died in over 14 years of clashes between Turkish forces and the PKK.

The United States earlier this week reprimanded some Greek members of parliament for expressing support for the PKK, saying that such backing was inconsistent with Greek efforts to fight terrorism and would contribute to tensions with Turkey.

Kohl stresses Germany's responsibility to Israel

BERLIN (AFP) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on Thursday underlined the "special responsibility" which Germany would always bear to Israel, currently celebrating the 50th anniversary of its creation.

This responsibility "holds for the past, for the present and for the future," Mr. Kohl said in a speech at a ceremony at the Israeli embassy in Berlin.

"Memories of the creation of Israel will always be linked to those of crimes perpetrated by the Nazis against the Jews," the chancellor said.

"For this reason, Germany and Israel will always have a singular relationship," he added.

"Germans should not and don't want to forget the barbarism of National Socialism and the unspeakable suffering of the victims," Mr. Kohl went on.

In a reference to the rise of the far-right in Germany, particularly in the former East Germany, Mr. Kohl called for determined efforts to resist all forms of extremist politics.

He warmly thanked Israel

for having struck up relations with West Germany so soon after its creation, noting, "it was anything but easy so soon after the Holocaust."

The Israeli ambassador to Germany, Avi Primor, said: "Germany today, second to the United States, is our closest friend."

Aside from the U.S., no country has worked so closely with Israel in all fields, Mr. Primor added.

Mr. Kohl remarked upon the rebirth of the Jewish community in Germany, which has doubled to reach 70,000 people since German reunification in 1990.

Prior to the arrival of the Nazis in power in 1933, there were 500,000 Jews in Germany.

The chancellor called for progress to be made in the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, adding that he was "confident" that the Israeli government would find a way clear to a solution.

Mr. Primor echoed his optimism. "We are convinced that we will finally find a compromise with the Palestinians," he said.

Israeli woman is heir to part of Auschwitz land

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli woman has disclosed that she has papers proving that she is the rightful heir to part of the land on which the Nazis built their death camp at Auschwitz in Poland.

Tzipora Franck, 63, who lives at Hedera north of Tel Aviv, said in an interview published in the weekend edition of Haaretz newspaper that she had recently travelled to Poland to clarify "this cursed inheritance."

"My parents preferred to keep this dreadful secret to themselves but my mother, who suffered from Alzheimer's disease and from a feeling of guilt for having escaped the Nazi hell, finally told me the truth a few years ago," she added.

She even said she had managed to ascertain the fact from documents written in old fashioned Polish legal language which was hard to translate. The contents of

the documents were backed up by aerial photographs taken by Allied troops.

Her grandfather, Yossef Metzger, owned a factory producing tarred paper on the site of the future concentration camp but his land was confiscated by the Nazis after Poland was invaded in September 1939.

"I vaguely remember my grandfather greeting me at the entrance to his factory. It was huge. There were big chimneys and material scattered all over the place."

This documents show that my entire family, except my mother, my father and myself, perished in Auschwitz and were buried in a common grave on the land which belonged to them."

Ms. Franck said she would keep the deeds to parts of the camp site "just to stop the Poles ever building commercial or rented buildings."

Cairo's population nears 15 million

CAIRO (AFP) — Cairo, one of the world's most crowded cities, has more than 6,500 people living in each square kilometre, according to latest official figures published Friday.

The population of the Egyptian capital and its suburbs rose in mid-1997 to 14.9 million people, who live in an area of 2,273 square kilometres, according to a planning ministry study.

"That means that on average, there are 6,583 people for every square kilometre," said the study, quoted by the government newspaper Al-Ahram.

The average density for the entire populated area of Egypt is 1,698 people per square kilometre, it said.

Egypt's population, estimated at 64 million, is concentrated in only 5.2 per cent of the country, mainly along the Nile River and in the northern delta, the ministry said.

Iranian opposition blasts U.S. overtures to Tehran

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. State Department's "persistent" and "awkward" overtures to Iran "will only encourage Tehran's mullahs to remain terrorists," an Iranian opposition group warned here Thursday.

Speaking at a press conference, a member of the National Council of Resistance of Iran said Washington must understand that Iran is entering a chaotic period and that the Islamic Republic is "a losing horse."

"Factional infighting has

entered the danger zone," spokesman Alireza Jafarzadeh said. "There is even talk of a coup d'etat by Revolutionary Guards."

Mr. Jafarzadeh also said that Tehran was preparing to launch "a new series of operations and military strikes against the Mujahadeen."

The People's Mujahadeen, Iran's main armed opposition group, has military bases in Iraq but also is engaged in intense political lobbying against the Tehran regime in European countries and the United States.

But Mr. Ali Mahdi said his faction's constitution allowed him to extend the leadership of the faction for months "if the situation is not smooth enough for the holding of new polls."

"I will not resign because my people still want me to head the faction, but surely, I am frustrated by the overall deadlocked peace process in Somalia, and particularly in divided Mogadishu," Mr. Ali Mahdi said.

The Abgal clan strongman

Somali warlord extends his faction rule until new polls in September

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Somali faction leader Ali Mahdi Mohammed has extended his faction leadership by six months to September, when new polls will be held, the north Mogadishu strongman told AFP here on Friday.

Mr. Ali Mahdi was elected leader of the Abgal Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA), which controls north Mogadishu, for two years in March 1996, a mandate which expired in March this year.

But Mr. Ali Mahdi said his faction's constitution allowed him to extend the leadership of the faction for months "if the situation is not smooth enough for the holding of new polls."

"I will not resign because my people still want me to head the faction, but surely, I am frustrated by the overall deadlocked peace process in Somalia, and particularly in divided Mogadishu," Mr. Ali Mahdi said.

The Abgal clan strongman

denied recent claims by three out of five deputies in the faction that his mandate to serve as leader of the SSA was over that he was now only serving in an individual capacity.

"It is true that my leadership as SSA chairman expired in March, but it was renewed for six months to facilitate the ongoing peace process both in Mogadishu and Somali in general," Mr. Ali Mahdi declared, adding: "We are in the middle of crucial talks with

18 killed in factional fighting in Somalia

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At least 18 people were killed and 26 others wounded in heavy factional fighting in the southern Somali port town of Kismayo overnight, witnesses contacted by radio said on Friday.

The fighting pitted militiamen of the Majerteen clan against their Marehan rivals. Eleven of the victims were killed inside the town and seven in the nearby village of Gubweyn. Several of the dead were civilians.

Commercial flights from Nairobi turned back before landing as fighting raged.

The militia command of Somali warlord Hussein Mohammad Aidid in Gubweyn, 15 kilometres north of Kismayo, said their men were attacked by the gunmen of the other warlord, General Mohammad Zaid Hirs Morgan, who controls Kismayo.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO
15:10 ...Cartoon — Jonny Quest
15:30 ...Drama — Wana Be
16:00 ...Drama — Neighbours
16:30 ...Doc. — Ocean Wild
17:00 French Programme — "Faut Pas Rever"
18:00 ...Acapulco Bay
19:00 ...Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — "Discovery Mag."
19:30 ...News headlines
19:35 Quiz Show — You Bet Your Life
20:00 ...Cinema, Cinema
20:30 ...Prism
21:10 ...Drama — Sirens
22:00 ...News in English
22:30 Feature film — A Brilliant Disguise
23:59 Comedy — Are You Being Served?
00:30 ...End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:11 ...Fajr
05:39 ...Sunrise
12:32 ...Dhuhr
16:12 ...Asr
19:25 ...Maghreb
20:53 ...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Amman International Church Tel. 865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweifeh Tel. 5920146
The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
The heat wave will last until Sunday evening. It will be hot, occasionally dusty, temperatures higher than average by 8-10 degrees centigrade, clouds appearing at different altitudes with a chance of scattered showers, and winds southeasterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot and dusty, occasional showers are expected, winds northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman ...24/36
Aqaba ...28/40
Deserts ...21/38
Jordan Valley ...27/41
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 35 Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 26 per cent, Aqaba 33 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Abbas A Bakim ...885446
Dr. Asraf Al-Ashhab ...5602507
Dr. Ayman Al-Mutaseb ...5347351
Dr. Jamal Jharah ...847351
Firas pharmacy ...5661912
Ferdows pharmacy ...778336
Al Asena pharmacy ...4637055
Natrakha pharmacy ...463672
Al Selam pharmacy ...4636730
Yaoub pharmacy ...4644945
Shmeisani pharmacy ...4637660
Najib pharmacy ...847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakr ...267852
Al Quds pharmacy ...(-)
ZARQA:
Dr. Ya'qoub Al-Khatib 991772
Khalifeh pharmacy ...985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre...4637111
Civil Defence Department...5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue...4630341
Civil Defence Emergency...199
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade...4617101
Blood Bank...775121
Highway Police...843402
Traffic Police...896390
Public Security Dept...4630321
Hotel Complaints...5605800
Price Complaints...5661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints 89467
Amman Municipality Complaints...787111
Telephone Information (directo-

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
The Islamic, Abdi ...5666131/7
Hassan Medical Centre Tel. 836813, 856856
Luzmila ...4630195
Khalidi Maternity...4644281/6
Aklieh Maternity...4642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman...4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani ...5607071
Shmeisani Hospital...5669131
University Hospital...5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667277/9
Al-Ahli, Abdi ...5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir...775111/26
Army, Marka ...891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:15 ...Aqaba (RJ)
10:05 ...New Delhi (RJ)
10:30 ...Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:50 ...Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:50 ...Damascus, Beirut (RJ)
11:25 ...Colombo (RJ)
15:35 ...New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:05 ...Cairo (RJ)
17:30 ...London (RJ)
23:40 ...Frankfurt (RJ)
23:59 ...Paris (RJ)
00:30 ...Paris (add) (RJ)
01:00 ...Bangkok (RJ)
Other Flights
06:05 London, Damascus (BA)
14:10 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
15:05 ...Vienna (OS)
18:00 ...Dubai, Muscat (EK)
19:00 ...Paris (AF)
19:05 ...Frankfurt (LH)
23:35 ...Cairo (MS)
23:40 ...Amsterdam (KL)
23:40 ...Beirut (ME)
01:05 London, Damascus (BA)
02:05 ...Belgrade (JU)
03:00 ...Rome (AZ)
Royal Wings (RW)
10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)
23:25 Aqaba (Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:00 ...Aqaba (RJ)
11:45 ...Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:00 ...Aqaba, Paris (add) (RJ)
12:30 ...Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:00 ...Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:00 ...Paris (RJ)
13:00 ...Brussels (RJ)
13:15 ...Cairo (RJ)
14:00 ...London (RJ)
21:10 ...Riyadh, Doha (RJ)
21:20 ...Bombay (RJ)
21:20 ...Jeddah (RJ)
22:00 ...Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
01:30 ...Aqaba, Paris (RJ)
Other Flights
07:00 ...Beirut (ME)
07:35 ...Damascus, London (BA)
15:00 ...Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
15:50 ...Vienna (OS)
19:00 ...Dubai (EK)
00:40 ...Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)
13:10 ...Belgrade (JU)
04:00 ...Rome (AZ)
Royal Wings (RW)
08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
21:30 Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

CONCERT

"Lorca's music on a guitar" by Rafael Gallego, at the Union Hall on Sunday at 8:00 p.m.
EXHIBITIONS
"Works by Ecuadorian artist Olmedo Quimbo" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, till May 12.
Paintings by Lebanese-American artist Adnan Entabi and "Poetry" by Al-Funun, Jabal Amman, till May 28.
Berlin-based Syrian artist Marwan Bashi, "A Suite of temporary Arab

Home Ne

Princess Basma attends scouts ceremony

GRASH (Paris) — HRH Princess Basma attended a ceremony marking the conclusion of a three-day scouts meeting held at the summer resort of Ephraim, in Israel, which was attended by 250 girls from the Ministry of Education's schools in the Kingdom.

The Princess addressed the scouts movement, describing it as a tool for raising young men and women to shoulder responsibilities and serve their communities.

The Princess announced the opening of the centre for girls being set up in the town near the Martyr's Memorial has been completed.

Princess Basma said she was working to raise the status of the centre's staff, JD140,000 cost.

The Ministry of Education pledged to fund the centre of the project, which is scheduled to be opened next summer.

Princess Basma, who accompanied by Minister of Education and Higher Education, Ahmad Hamdan and the scouts movement in Jordan, said the girls' scouts presented badges to the scout leaders.

PRINCESS Thursday in the design mark increase in the

Orph first in

By Sahar M. Special to the R.

AMMAN — The offer and to children across the Kingdom, the Orphaned Children's (FOC) launched its first inter-scholastic event.

Vakrie Ndarau O programme told the Jordanian for the first time which took place Hussein Sports, the young people's opportunity to be involved in some sports activities.

"This is a step in which the private and public sectors participate in sports activities," said Ndarau.

AMMAN (J.T.) — Chief and manager of Sawi Al Mara were arrested Wednesday evening by security forces after the weekly's Jamal Mubarek day.

Security forces gave any reason for the arrests at the time members said.

According to Mubarek, Editor-in-Chief, Amman and Manager Ayman Rumayeh taken from their home Wednesday.

"Because of an article in the paper ran in a section."

The article in the interview with Ahmad Owaid Al-harsh critic of government.

What's going on

Editors

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Italian progra

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"One of the project principles is to provide humans are more than anything else," the Jordan Times in a

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JERASH (Petra) — HRH Princess Basma attended a ceremony marking the conclusion of a three-day scouts meeting held at the summer resort of Dibbin, near Jerash, which was attended by 250 girl scouts from the Ministry of Education's schools around the Kingdom.

In a brief address at the meeting, Princess Basma paid tribute to the Jordanian scouts movement, describing it as a tool for training young men and women to shoulder responsibilities and serve local communities.

The Princess announced that part of the centre for scouts being set up in Amman near the Martyr's Monument has been completed.

Princess Basma said she was working to raise JD100,000 of the centre's estimated JD140,000 cost. The Ministry of Education has pledged to fund the balance of the project, which is scheduled to be completed next summer, she added.

Princess Basma, who was accompanied by Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan and leaders of the scouts movement in Jordan, watched folklore performances by the girl scouts and presented badges to four of the scout leaders.



PRINCESS SARVATH ATTENDS MARCH: HRH Princess Sarvath takes part Thursday in a march organised by the Jordan Red Crescent Society (JRCS) under the slogan "For Your Safety... Buckle Up." The JRCS organised this march to mark International Red Cross/Crescent and to raise public awareness on the increase in the number of car accidents and the resulting casualties (Petra photo)

Orphan aid organisation holds first inter-scholastic athletic event

By Suba Ma'ayeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a bid to offer aid to less fortunate children across the Kingdom, the Friends of Orphaned Children Organisation (FO-O) yesterday launched its first annual inter-scholastic athletic event.

Valerie Ndaruzaniye, FO-O programme coordinator, told the Jordan Times that the fundraising event, which took place at Al Hussein Sports City, is important "because it gives the young population an opportunity to be together... and perhaps to attract the interest of some individual spectators in this type of activity."

"This is one of the strategies in which children from private and public schools, as well as orphans, participate in public sport activities," said Ms. Ndaruzaniye.

The FO-O, established in 1997, is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which provides assistance through sports, social and cultural activities to the groups and institutions caring for orphans and disadvantaged children.

"Medical doctors conduct workshops, lectures and conferences for orphaned children and adolescents and our FO-O sport instructors also train them and assess their physical performance regularly to help build their health," Ms. Ndaruzaniye added.

She explained that the FO-O will assist four orphanages in the beginning and will provide aid to other institutions at a later stage depending on FO-O resources.

The FO-O is seeking donors "who" could contribute by providing various sports equipment such as bicycles, basketball backboards and table tennis and volleyball accessories.

"Orphans, disadvantaged children and concerned population segments cannot rely [solely] on the government's assistance," said Naseem Madanat, FO-O vice president.

He noted that the role of NGOs is indispensable in terms of alleviating the plight of orphans.

"We realise that the role of NGOs is becoming vital in supporting and compensating for the lack of resources in many ways," stressed Mr. Madanat.

He said that when more NGOs and individuals participate, programmes benefiting disadvantaged children could become more effective.

Over 4,000 new telephone lines installed in Wadi Seir neighbourhood

By Ahmed Naser
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A total of 4,400 new low-cost phone lines were installed in a joint project between His Majesty's Royal Communications (HMRC) and the Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) in the Wadi Seir neighbourhood, a senior official told the Jordan Times on Friday.

"After His Majesty King Hussein saw what had befallen this neighbourhood, he knew that something should be done," said the senior official, who asked not to be named.

Telephone line subscriptions have been on hold in Wadi Seir for the past six

years due to technical problems that the JTC was unable to resolve, according to Mamoun Balqar, JTC general director.

But after the Hijri new year celebrated on April 27, a joint HMRC-JTC 10-day project made 4,400 phone lines available at the Wadi Seir telephone exchange.

"The new phone lines are now ready for distribution to subscribers in Wadi Seir," said Mr. Balqar.

The official said the new telephone lines cost \$980,000. "The phone lines were installed at below cost rates," the official added.

In the past, installation of each phone line would have cost the JTC an average of \$1,200 in comparison to the

\$200 per line during the joint HMRC-JTC project.

"The abundance of skilled manpower, people who know how to make use of modern technology, has saved the government's treasury department the burden of debt on this project," the official said.

"On the contrary, JTC, is in a position to make a substantial profit out of the project at prices that are at the same time affordable to citizens."

The cut in costs comes as a result of applying technology known as PCM that makes use of existing copper wire infrastructure by multiplying the number of subscribers who use the same physical line.

Earlier in April, King Hussein made international cir-

cuits via Hashem I, a satellite channel run by the HMRC, available to public and private Internet service providers at rates 30 per cent cheaper than JTC's in the hope that this would widen the circle of Web users in the Kingdom.

This has resulted in JTC's reconsideration of its current price structures, said Mr. Balqar.

"The King's initiative speeded things along and has encouraged us [the JTC] to offer better services and more competitive prices," he added, alluding that services such as caller ID and 800 numbers would be available "soon."

Arab Gulf countries have had these services for the past five years or more.

Amman commerce chamber to attend Gaza trade fair

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC) will take part in a one-week trade fair which is due to open Saturday in the Palestinian city of Gaza.

The fair, organised by the Jordan Trade Association in conjunction with the Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCCO), aims at orienting the Palestinian public on Jordanian products and enhancing cooperation between the private sectors and economic centres in the Kingdom and Palestine, according to ACC board member Salman Qudah, who will represent the chamber at the event.

In addition to a large number of Jordanian businesses that are participating, invitations have been sent to prominent Palestinian businesses in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to attract visitors to the trade fair, Mr. Qudah said.

The ACC and Arab Bank contributed to the organisation of the fair in conjunction with the concerned authorities of the two countries, he added.

Mr. Qudah said he hoped that the fair, to be held at the Rashad Shawwa business centre in Gaza, would contribute to the ongoing Jordanian-Palestinian efforts to replace Israeli products with Jordanian goods in Palestinian markets.

Transportation minister asks CAA to reevaluate airline service fees

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Transport Sami Gammoh has urged the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to re-examine the present rates for services provided to airlines at Jordanian airports, which he described as "far below" those in neighbouring countries.

At a meeting with CAA Director General Jasser Ziyad and other senior officials, Mr. Gammoh said it is the CAA's prerogative to ensure that policies connected with air transport and civil aviation conform to the rules of the International Civil Aviation Association.

Mr. Gammoh stressed that the CAA should modernise its services and upgrade the efficiency of its staff, as this would have a beneficial result on the national economy.

To this purpose, he said, the CAA should conduct a study on its present rates for

services to the various airlines at Jordanian airports with a view to earning sufficient returns to finance modernisation plans at airports and upgrade the training of employees.

Mr. Gammoh visited the Queen Noor Civil Aviation Training College and met its director to discuss plans for improvements. He discussed the present services at the airports and the needs for modernisation.

The minister also visited the Hijaz Railway Corporation and met with its director general, Abdul Razzaq Abul Filat. He later made a field trip to the railway and inaugurated a train freight car that was converted into a 50-seat passenger carriage.

He inspected the railway's services and was briefed on current plans to modernise railway services. The minister chaired a meeting to discuss a general modernisation

plan for the railway, the conversion of desert railway stations into resthouses to promote domestic tourism, and other relevant questions.

The trains running on part of the Hijaz Railway, built by the Ottomans at the beginning of the present century, are now used for short excursions by tourists, and efforts are under way to improve services to attract more visitors.

Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Bitaji, who last month accompanied a group of 50 British tourists on a trip along the railway, said the Hijaz Railway is one of Jordan's treasures in view of its close connection to historical events and the Great Arab Revolt.

The present stretch of the railway runs, south from Amman to Um Al Hiran, Jizah and Qataneh and north toward Damascus.

What's going on

AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

* The first American Arts Festival at the American Center, Abdoun (May 10-13). It includes a "Sculptured Designs" exhibition by Jewellery Designer Suzanne El Masry and Sculptor Samer Tabbaa (to open on May 10); classical guitar concert by Jad Azkoul on May 11 at 7:00 p.m.; lecture by Salwa Mikdadi

Nashashibi on "Contemporary Arab Art in the U.S." on May 12 at 6:00; and a guitar and oud concert "East Meets West" by Jad Azkoul and Sakher Hat-tar on May 13 at 7:00 p.m. (All festival events are open to the public and are free of charge.)

CONCERT

* Lorca's music on a guitar concert by Rafael Serrallet, at the Union Bank Hall on Sunday, May 10 at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Ecuadorian artist Olmedo Quimbato at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until May 12.

* Paintings by Lebanese-American artist Brel Adnan entitled "Artist's Book of Art and Poetry" at Darat Al-Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until May 28. Also displaying works by Beirut-based Syrian artist Marwan Bashil entitled "A Suite of Heads," and works by contemporary Arab artists.

Editors at weekly newspaper detained

AMMAN (J.T.) — The chief and managing editors of Sawt Al Mara weekly were arrested Wednesday evening by security forces, the weekly's publisher Jamal Muhtaseb said Friday.

Security forces did not give any reason for the arrests at the time, family members said.

According to Mr. Muhtaseb, Editor-in-Chief Atef Ameh and Managing Editor Ayman Rumameh were taken from their homes late Wednesday evening "because of an article the paper ran in a recent edition."

The article included an interview with deputy Ahmad Oweidi Abbadi, a harsh critic of government

policies.

The weekly ran a headline on its cover page quoting Dr. Abbadi as saying: "It's time the director of the intelligence department left."

Dr. Abbadi praised the intelligence department but said "the director holds a personal grudge against me and I don't know why."

Meanwhile, Dr. Abbadi praised Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali as a very democratic and honest man, but said Dr. Majali's cabinet "seems incapable of performing its duties to the fullest."

Mr. Muhtaseb said Mr. Atef Ameh was questioned by security forces last week about the interview with Deputy Abbadi.

Mr. Ameh's brother told the Jordan Times that the attorney general issued a search and an arrest warrant against his brother which attributed the arrest to the interview with Deputy Abbadi.

Earlier this year and during the Lower House of Parliament discussion of the 1998 budget, Dr. Abbadi, who is a former police officer, lashed out at government policies and accused past and present governments of nepotism, favouritism and "putting the wrong man in the wrong position."

He also accused ministers and their aides of wasting millions of dinars and driving the country towards an abyss.

Italian NGO begins development programme targeting disabled refugees

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An Italian humanitarian organisation, in its first development project in the Kingdom, is aiming to rehabilitate disabled people in the country's refugee camps, provide them with humanitarian aid and train them to be productive members of the community.

The Rome-based group Movimondo also aims to train teachers and families on how to create a community-based rehabilitation (CBR) project in order to help disabled people, according to Laura Sapoulo, the project coordinator.

"One of the project's main principles is to prove that humans are more important than anything else," she told the Jordan Times in a recent

interview. "The project aims to give such people feelings of belonging, self-esteem and security, because the community sometimes considers them as something to be ashamed of."

Movimondo was established in Jordan four months ago, and began this programme last month in the Wihdat, Hiteen, and Talbia refugee camps, she added.

The plan includes an introduction to Movimondo's policies, public awareness campaigns for residents, and training courses for people working in community centres for rehabilitation (CCR), followed by orientation programmes on CBR, Ms. Sapoulo said.

In the next stage, Movimondo is planning to carry out a survey to prepare accurate statistics on disabled

people in order to supply them with necessary equipment for income-generating projects.

"We have good relations with the local people because we do not consider ourselves as donors, but their partners in working hand in hand, taking decisions, and achieving sustainable development," Ms. Sapoulo said.

She added that this project is totally funded by the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), but at the present the budget has not been finalised because the programme is still in its first stage.

According to Movimondo's annual report, the organisation launched a similar project in the Gaza Strip in 1995, and has contributed to the creation of a centre for

physiotherapy and rehabilitation for the disabled. The centre is run by the Society of Physically Handicapped People (SPHP) in Gaza whose numbers include more than two thousand disabled persons.

Movimondo is a non-governmental organisation which was established in 1972. It is active in 15 developing countries and aims to fight against poverty, protect human rights, promote global culture, international cooperation, solidarity, and sustainable development, and strengthen local institutions to create conditions of participation and self-determination.

It concentrates most of its activities in Southern Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Middle East.

Arts festival to feature exhibition on jewellery design

By Omar Karmi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, HRH Princess Wijdan Ali on Sunday will open the first American Arts Festival in Jordan at the American Center at the American embassy.

Featuring a lecture by Salwa Mikada Nashashibi on Contemporary Arab Art in the U.S. and two concerts by guitarist Jad Azkoul (one with "oud player Sakher Hat-tar), the festival opens at 6 p.m. with an exhibition of jewellery by the internationally acclaimed Egyptian artist Suzanne Masry and sculptures by Jordanian resident sculptor Samer Tabbaa.

Ms. Masry's jewellery provides a stunning example of jewellery design not merely as a craft, but as an art form. Having studied fine arts and textile design in America, her work reflects a wealth of influences, from the Arabic tradition to modern Impressionist paintings; an emphasis on meaning rather than form, but mixed with a very Eastern eye for immaculate detail and colour.

This breadth of influence is, according to Ms. Masry, vital to her work, as she believes it would be essential to any craftsman's: "I think for anybody in the crafts... the study of fine arts, or at least some drawing classes are essential... in my opinion, to be able to materialise the impact nature or life has on you. Your eye becomes more sensitive."

In fact, Ms. Masry started out as an engineer, studying and taking a degree in the subject from Cairo University. Although she always had an interest in jewellery design, and completed a brief apprenticeship in the 'souq' in Cairo with Khan Al Khalili traditional designs, it wasn't until she went to

New Jersey to continue her engineering studies that she finally made the switch, changing her course of study and finishing at the Newark School for Fine Art and Industrial Design.

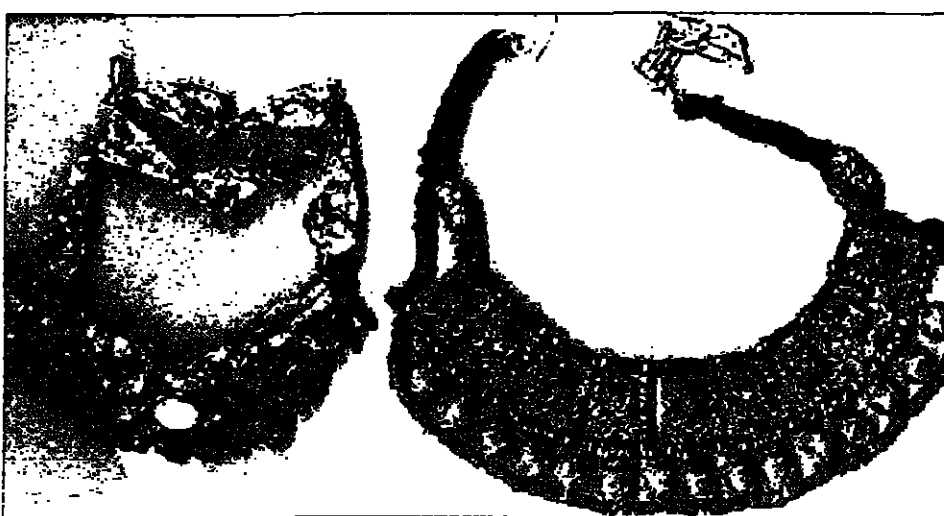
It was a move that she didn't tell her family about, until, a few years later, she was working as a textile designer.

Her first exhibition of jewellery design came in Egypt in 1981 after two years devoted only to hard graft (she produces, from the germ of an idea to the end, her jewellery alone). She exhibited with the established Egyptian painter Al Anssouri, and the exhibition, which was very well received, set her up to be able to make a living purely from jewellery design.

Four years in Paris then secured her international breakthrough. Exhibiting at the Institute of the Arab World, she managed to build up a regular following, not an easy task in the fickle world of French fashion. A full page feature in Elle magazine secured the connection, which continues until now. She is one of the few artists anywhere to have her work exhibited around the world in her own lifetime.

She works with silver, enamels, semi-precious stones, and gold-plated silver, and, despite the emphasis on design, her jewellery is meant to be wearable, and not just for show. Jewellery, as she says, is functional, "it has to beautify the wearer, or make a statement about the wearers taste. I try to make it possible for people to wear my jewellery without trouble."

Ms. Masry will give a workshop on New Jewellery Design with the Dana Nature Reserve Project on Wednesday, May 13. Both Ms. Masry's jewellery and Mr. Tabbaa's sculptures will be exhibited until May 25.



Two pieces of Suzanne Masry's work

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Hope for Sudanese

THE ACCORD struck in Nairobi between the Sudanese government and leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Army is remarkable on two counts. First, the settlement of the conflict between Khartoum and the rebels is going to be based on the result of a referendum in which the southern Sudanese will decide whether to stay in the union or secede. Second, it represents one of the rare occasions in which a developing country resorts to the principle of self-determination to resolve an ethnic conflict.

For Sudan to leap forward and apply the mother of all human rights, the right to self-determination, albeit belatedly, is indeed commendable by any standard. The fact that the projected referendum will be held under international supervision is solid evidence that Khartoum is serious about its offer. No nation in contemporary history has accepted to go that far at the risk of dismembering itself.

The southern Sudanese and their leaders have so far expressed their desire to remain part of the greater Sudan. Whether they will still opt for that is at the moment not clear. But whatever decision they reach must be respected not only because it would ensure them their rights but also end years of strife and bloodshed and spare Khartoum the resources it has so far been spending on war.

In the run up to the referendum it is important now to agree upon a ceasefire to enable humanitarian relief to reach the people in the south who are threatened with famine. To further encourage the Sudanese authorities in their quest for peace it is high time to lift the string of sanctions placed on that country by the West.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Mahmoud Rimawi praised the Palestinian National Authority for its adherence to the peace process and its wisdom by accepting the American proposals on the withdrawal from the West Bank. The writer said the Palestinian stand helped embarrass the Israeli prime minister and paved the way for a direct confrontation between him and the U.S. administration. However, the London meetings are not over yet, the venue has been shifted to Washington next week during which more pressure is expected to be exerted on Netanyahu to make him comply with the requirements of peace, said the writer. The London meeting showed the world in general and the U.S. and Europe in particular that it is Netanyahu who is obstructing peace by rejecting Washington's ideas for the implementation of the Oslo accord, according to the writer. The London meeting, Rimawi said, resulted in a U.S. stand favourable to the Palestinians as Madeleine Albright has clung hard to the U.S. proposals and expressed determination for their implementation.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Nicola Naser reflected on American aid to Israel and the Arab region, particularly Jordan. He said, according to USAID Director Brian Atwood, Jordan received \$2.2 billion from the U.S. in aid since 1990 but in contrast Israel received \$77.7 billion in the same period although the Kingdom is in more need of aid for its development than Israel. The writer said that while the American aid to Jordan has been directed to encourage it to maintain peace with Israel and to help it carry out family planning programmes, U.S. aid to Israel helped the Jewish state build up a formidable arsenal of conventional and weapons of mass destruction and maintain its hold on the Arab World and perpetuate its occupation of territories belonging to three Arab states. He said Jordan should reexamine the U.S. aid programme in that it must be linked to helping the Kingdom attain sustainable development and should be directed in a manner that would help end the arms race and establish genuine and lasting peace.

Jordanian Perspective

Western powers continue to manipulate Palestinian situation

By Dr. Musa Keilan

IT WAS no surprise that the much-heralded London talks failed to lift the logjam in the Israeli-Palestinian track of the peace process. The writing was on the wall since the day British Prime Minister Tony Blair announced his "initiative" of hosting the meetings of Israeli, Palestinian and American leaders that it was an exercise aimed at securing Palestinian acceptance of the down-sized Israeli offer of a redeployment in the West Bank. Applying pressure on Israel to abide by its obligations and commitments was never in the cards, and hence it dismayed not many in this part of the world that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stood firm on his ground, and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat found nothing dramatic or even new in the London talks.

Obviously, the next step in the exercise is a round of Washington meetings, and we have little hope of achieving a breakthrough there either. Of course, if anything, the London talks offered a face-saving formula for the Clinton administration to invite Netanyahu to Washington — for the sake of salvaging the peace process, of course, as we have been told — after going through another period of "strain" in relations between President Bill Clinton and Netanyahu. Well, if it was true that there was indeed such a "strain," then it had nothing to do with the peace process. If the "strain" was rooted in American frustration over Netanyahu's refusal to abide by his country's agree-

ments with the Palestinians, then we wonder why Washington chose to overlook that frustration and continue to play the Israeli tune.

Washington watchers, pro-Israeli, anti-Israeli and neutral alike, are convinced there is no such thing as American pressure on Israel; there never was, is or will be. The Palestinians would be better off to stop in their track for a moment before accepting that the Washington talks would "accelerate" the "final status" negotiations. Such acceleration would only result in hasty agreements under pressure leading to the deprivation of most of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians in the end. It does not require an expert to see that as long as the government of Netanyahu remains in power in Israel, the Palestinians might as well sit back doing nothing except accelerating, whatever little way they could, the political demise of Netanyahu and his likes from the Israeli scene.

The present forces in power in Israel have yet to come to terms with the reality that peace with the Arabs is conditional on honouring the rights of the Palestinians, and it is unlikely that the politically-immature Netanyahu is the right person to lead the Israeli right-wing into accepting that reality. As such, the scepticism that we have, like most others who want a just, comprehensive and lasting peace agreement in the Middle East, is quite justified. We do not expect the Washington meetings to provide any

dramatic breakthroughs, but the danger is that more pressure will be exerted on Arafat to accept whatever Netanyahu is willing to offer in return for some token gestures like a final okay for the building of a Palestinian airport at Gaza and perhaps a "safe passage" between Gaza and the West Bank.

The long and short of what we have seen so far since the signing of the interim agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis is a pattern of American and European — British to be more accurate — efforts to manoeuvre the Palestinians into a situation where they are left with little choice but to accept the Israeli version of a solution to the problem. What is even more irksome is the hypocritical declarations of support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people while we all know that the Palestinian negotiating position is weak by virtue of Israel's physical control of the Palestinian territories in question and the inability of the Arabs to force a military showdown to wrench control of the land.

Instead of issuing such misleading declarations, the powers at work for "peace" in the Middle East — a peace that is cooked and spiced in Israel's kitchen — would do us all a big favour by affirming that their objective is not to bring about justice and international legitimacy in the region but to serve the Israeli goal of forcing its solution down the Palestinian throat.

U.S. not prepared to lose political capital over peace process stalemate, says former official

By George S. Hishmeh

WASHINGTON — "In the United States and Israel, politics has taken over. It's sad, because we have a situation today where we have a second-term president who could really, I think, get some significant things accomplished (in the Middle East) but to do that, you must be willing to spend some political capital, and so far, at least, the (Clinton) administration has not indicated it's willing to do that."

This damaging commentary on U.S. foreign policy came while U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was holding separate meetings in London with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on ways to revive the comatose Middle East peace process.

The speaker was James Baker, the former American secretary of state and architect of the Madrid peace process, who was speaking May 4 to a closed group at a plush Washington hotel two blocks from the White House.

The United States today, he continued, "is not doing what we historically must do if there's going to be what we historically have done and what we must do if there's going to be progress toward peace in the Middle East. Indeed, we almost seem to be paralysed, almost impotent."

He continued: "We are paralysed about putting (the U.S.) position out there on the table. The United States is entitled to have a position on these matters. We have significant and substantial interests in the Middle East. Those interests do not always accord exactly with the interests of the state of Israel."

While stressing that the United States is "irrevocably, absolutely, and unconditionally committed to the security of Israel," Baker thought that the United States should still be able to say:

"Look, it is the view of the honest broker,

it is the view of the United States, as the only country in the world that can really move this process forward, that there ought to be a 13.1 per cent withdrawal" from the occupied Palestinian territories.

He seemed indignant that the United States is "afraid" to confirm this American position which has been leaked to the press.

Baker defended Secretary Madeleine Albright for whom he said he has great respect and noted her statement to the New York Times last month in which she told the interviewer: "Don't believe those who say there is a (Middle East) peace process. That's not the situation. There is a real problem, and the United States is losing its credibil-

ity and cognizant of 'domestic politics,' particularly the Israeli lobby."

There was further evidence of that in the attitude of the Clinton administration toward Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

A column in the Washington Post last week pointed out that Clinton, guided by Berger, had pigeonholed a 1992 warning by then President George Bush that threatened U.S. "military force" if Milosevic destabilised Kosovo where the overwhelmingly dominant Albanian ethnic population was subjected to a killing spree.

Columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak saw this as a "major policy change,

There is currency to the view here that Secretary Albright appears handcuffed on the Middle East and that more and more foreign policy decisions are being dictated from the White House, especially by National Security Adviser Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger, who is described as cautious and cognizant of "domestic politics," particularly the Israeli lobby.

ty among all the parties involved."

After describing Albright's assessment as "fairly sad," Baker added: "In my view, Secretary Albright would like to be far more forward-leaning with respect to the Middle East peace process than she is currently able to be."

There is currency to the view here that Secretary Albright appears handcuffed on the Middle East and that more and more foreign policy decisions are being dictated from the White House, especially by National Security Adviser Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger, who is described as cau-

that greatly reduces ...Albright's diplomatic freedom of action." They added:

"That spells trouble for U.S. foreign policy. Coming on the heels of Albright's losing battle with Clinton and Berger over her appeal to pressure Israel on Mideast peace, she now risks being marginalised. Important decisions are being made not by Albright but by the president on Berger's advice, apparently from the narrow perspective of domestic politics."

They wrote, "Clinton is bred to the game of domestic politics, not foreign policy. With the midterm election six months away,

the last thing the president wants is American casualties in a faraway place."

Moreover, the extent to which Clinton's vice president, Al Gore, a presidential aspirant, would go in currying favour with the Israelis and the American Jewish community was starkly clear to readers of the Washington Post over the weekend.

Thomas W. Lippman, who travelled with the vice president during his just-concluded Mideast tour, began a Jerusalem-dated story thusly:

"If Vice President Gore runs for the top job in 2000, he can be confident that no rival will easily outflank him on the issue of support for Israel."

"Here to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Jewish state, Gore wowed Israeli and American audiences with passionate affirmations of his commitment and admiration, his rhetoric flowing with biblical references and citations of Old Testament prophets."

In reply to a question from this reporter, Baker underlined that it is "essential" that the United States assume a strong leadership role. "Only the United States, after all, with our unique relationship with Israel and the special role that we now occupy in world affairs, can serve as honest broker between Israelis and Arabs."

He continued: "But to do so, it's important that we maintain the integrity of our position by acting in a manner that is both objective and strong. From time to time, this is going to include telling truths that are going to upset one or more of the various parties."

"From time to time, it's going to involve the telling of truths that are going to be upsetting to the Arab side. From time to time, it's going to involve the telling of truths that are going to be upsetting to the Israeli side."

"And to put it as gently as I know how, this is not a task which has come naturally to the present administration."

'Netanyahu still to blame for peace process failures'

REVIEWED BY
 ELIA NASRALLAH

THE LOCAL dailies last week highlighted the Palestinian-Israeli meeting in London, Israel's position with regard to withdrawals from the West Bank and Jordanian domestic issues.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek addressed the failure of the London meeting which grouped the Palestinians and the Israelis saying the result calls for a reassessment of the whole Middle East peace process on the part of the Arab Nation. Expressing the belief that the Middle East is now facing danger more than any time in the past, the writer said the reassessment is needed in view of the possibility of a new cycle of violence and new explosions that can erupt at any moment. The writer said the London meeting was more between the Americans and the Israelis than between the Palestinians and the Israelis as the U.S. tried hard to convince Netanyahu of his idea and plans to no avail. He said the U.S. has tried to cover up for the failure by shifting the talks to Washington in the coming week. But, he said, as long as the Jewish state remains intransigent the failure is bound to occur again.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Marwan

Hazine said the weakness of the U.S. secretary of state in handling Netanyahu's adamant stand prompted her to shift the meetings to Washington where perhaps more pressure can be exerted on the Israeli prime minister. But, Hazine said, deep down Secretary Albright realises that Netanyahu will continue to be deceitful and will try to escape from any pressure and therefore there is little hope that she will be able to persuade him to accept the U.S. proposals. The writer said Netanyahu has two options: to be committed genuinely towards peace and the implementation of the agreements with the Palestinians or continue to reject the calls for peace and so create an atmosphere that would lead to more destruction and more disasters. The writer said that so far the Americans have declined to present their plan officially to the Palestinians because Netanyahu rejects them outright, and in the Washington meeting the U.S. is perhaps hoping to pressure the Palestinians to accept less than 13.1 per cent as provided in the U.S. plan.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Saleh Qallab expects Netanyahu to show a more defiant and adamant stand at the Washington party than in London because, he said, the Israeli prime minister is well assured of the U.S.

Congress' backing of his stand. The writer said the U.S. Congress is supporting Netanyahu in his drive to wreck the Oslo accords and force the Palestinians to give more concessions to the Israelis. By shifting the talks to Washington Secretary Albright has perhaps wanted to hand over her failed mission to her boss, the

THE WEEK IN PRINT

U.S. president, and perhaps is hoping that the Palestinians will give way and accept Netanyahu's terms for a settlement and his own version of withdrawals from the West Bank. Since the Palestinians are determined to withstand the pressure, said the writer, it is a far-gone conclusion that the Washington meeting will not meet a better fate than that which was held in London.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Taher Adwan tackled Israel's celebrations of the 50th anniversary of their state in Palestine saying as much delight the anniversary was to the Zionists it was equally

painful to the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians. In the celebrations the Israeli leaders spoke with pride about their victories in the war, about their occupation of Palestinian land, their military power and their achievements but they never uttered a word about the prospects of peace and the desire to build peace with their neighbours, noted the writer. The Israelis saw in the anniversary an opportunity for renewing their hostile stand towards the Arabs and for reasserting their aggressive stand and their intransigent position with regard to the peace accords, he added. But the Arabs on the other hand saw in this tragedy a reminder for them of their lost land and a moment to renew their resolve to regain their usurped rights.

Al Dustour's Nawaf Zaru said Israel's rejection of the American proposals and its determination to wreck the Oslo accords should prompt the Arab countries to take stock of the peace process and to try to find new priorities for collective action against Israel. The main priority, he said, is to halt the whole peace process which has been unproductive and has been exploited by the Israelis to strengthen their own stand. The Palestinians and the Arabs are in need of a new stand and a concerted

ed effort and a truce among their leaders so that the whole attention can be focused on the Palestine question, demanded the writer. He said unless the Arab countries take a very strong united stand at all levels, the Israelis will not budge from their present stubborn stand.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek reflected on a draft law on press and publications which the government is currently preparing to replace the 1993 law. He saw a good sign in Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour's recent statement that the new law would give more freedom to the press and would shift authority in dealing with violations from the government to the judiciary. The writer said no doubt the present law is far better than those prevailing in the other Arab states where freedoms almost do not exist. But, he said, Jordanians expect to see more freedoms from the press to cater to the requirements of the democratic process in the Kingdom. He said Jordanians should not stop in the middle of the road towards the fulfillment of democracy, and the new law should end such penalties as imprisonment of journalists. The writer said the whole world is watching Jordan to see if it is sincere towards the fulfillment of democracy.

Features

New leaf world's

By Dale Gavlak

GAZA, Egypt — Egypt is hoping that an operation performed on "the old sick person on Earth" will revive the fortunes of the country's terror-stricken tourism trade.

The government is making preparations for an international gala event to celebrate the restoration of the Great Sphinx of Giza, the world's most famous colossus — 242 feet long and 66 feet high, with the head of a pharaoh and the body of a lion. When the final stone was set on the 10-year project, Dr. Zahi Hawass, custodian of the statue, had tears in his eyes.

"Perhaps I'm the only one who felt the smile of the Sphinx on the day," said Hawass, director of the Giza Museum, who felt a personal responsibility for ensuring that the restoration work was carried out properly.

There was no ceremony at the time as scaffolding was removed last December, because of the terrorist attack in Luxor the month before in which 58 tourists were killed. The lighter made any sort of celebration inappropriate. Now, with security heightened and most countries lifting bans on travel to Egypt, Cairo said it can go ahead with plans to reveal the newly repaired statue for the first time.

The Sphinx is Egypt's national symbol and its top tourist attraction. The badly needed restoring. Flakes of stone were falling from its chest, while its black weighing hundreds of pounds had crumbled from its body. Previous restoration projects had badly contributed to the Sphinx's deterioration. The use of cement had particularly damaging because it eroded the limestone. Modern materials such as pollution and vibrations from four buses, had further shaken and weakened the statue. Hawass supervised the team of Egyptian labourers, artisans and archaeologists. They used 12,244 hand-chiselled white limestone blocks to renovate the beast's paws.

The Saturday

BACK TO THE WALL

By Susan Delgado, Topeka, Kansas

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106	Poem divisions	107	Resistance units
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182	Stable youngster	183	Frugidity
184	Frugidity	185	Without
186	Without	187	Entrapment
188	Entrapment	189	"Genui Schach"
190	"Genui Schach"	191	Soprano
192	Soprano	193	Refrigerant
194	Refrigerant	195	Sample a sample
196	Sample a sample	197	Car maintenance
198	Car maintenance	199	check
200	check	201	Beatty and
202	Beatty and	203	Burdine
204	Burdine	205	Work units
206	Work units	207	That certain
208	That certain	209	Corp honchos
210	Corp honchos	211	Noun-forming
212	Noun-forming	213	suffix
214	suffix	215	Draft letters
216	Draft letters	217	Derney honcho
218	Derney honcho	219	Michael
220	Michael	221	Critical moment
222	Critical moment	223	Cash's singing
224	Cash's singing	225	deafness
226	deafness	227	Concerning
228	Concerning	229	constellations
230	constellations	231	Palating
232	Palating	233	White World's
234	White World's	235	White World's

New lease of life for world's oldest invalid

By Dale Gavlak

GIZA, Egypt — Egypt is hoping that an operation performed on "the oldest sick person on Earth" will revive the fortunes of the country's terrorism-hit tourism trade.

The government is making preparations for an international gala event to celebrate the restoration of the Great Sphinx of Giza, the world's most famous colossus — 242 feet long and 66 feet high, with the head of a pharaoh and the body of a lion.

When the final stone was set on the left paw of the Sphinx, marking the end of a 10-year project, Dr. Zahi Hawass, custodian of the statue, had tears in his eyes.

"Perhaps I'm the only one who felt the smile of the Sphinx on the day," says Hawass, director of the Giza Plateau, who felt a personal responsibility for ensuring that the restoration work was carried out properly.

There was no ceremony at the time the scaffolding was removed last December, because of the terrorist attack in Luxor the month before in which 58 tourists were killed. The slaughter made any sort of celebration inappropriate. Now, with security tightened and most countries lifting bans on travel to Egypt, Cairo feels it can go ahead with plans to unveil the newly repaired statue formally.

The Sphinx is Egypt's national symbol and its top tourist attraction. But it badly needed restoring. Flakes had been falling from its chest, while stone blocks weighing hundreds of pounds had crumbled from its body.

Previous restoration projects had actually contributed to the Sphinx's deterioration. The use of cement had been particularly damaging because it had eroded the limestone. Modern-day irritants, such as pollution and vibrations from tour buses, had further shaken and weakened the statue.

Hawass supervised the "team" of Egyptian labourers, artisans and archaeologists. They used 12,244 hand-chiselled, white limestone blocks to renovate the beast's paws,

legs and stomach. Their efforts cost \$2.5 million.

Hawass says they stopped the flaking of the chest by applying a special mixture of lime and sand, a process that will need to be repeated every five years. Underground water levels, which had been threatening the foundations, were reduced.

Restorers used computer modelling and other new methods to make the repairs as faithful as possible.

Previous restoration projects had actually contributed to the Sphinx's deterioration. The use of cement had been particularly damaging because it had eroded the limestone.

"We have to be near the Sphinx forever, because this is the oldest sick person on Earth. You cannot say that the Sphinx is safe and leave it," says Hawass. "The Sphinx is safe and smiling now because the job of restoration has been done very well."

They did not replace the statue's nose and beard, lost long ago. "The Sphinx is a ruin — we should keep it as a ruin," insists Hawass. "We did not really change anything on the Sphinx at all."

Although most tourists say they are pleased with the work, there are some detractors.

Andy Sylvester from Washington, D.C. said he was disappointed with the use of limestone blocks: "I wish they'd left the original body intact and not put all the blocks on there — it kind of makes it look cheap."

The Sphinx may have been safest while it was buried under centuries of sand. Believed to have been carved

on the instructions of the Pharaoh Chephren about 4,600 years ago, the statue was part of a temple complex — never completed — that stood in front of his immense pyramid, the second largest on the Giza Plateau.

According to legend, a young prince rediscovered the Sphinx, buried up to its neck in sand, while hunting gazelle. Weary, he took a nap in the statue's shadow and dreamt it offered him the crown of Egypt in return for restoration. The prince cleared away the sand, used limestone blocks to repair the body, and was later crowned Pharaoh Thutmose IV.

A more cynical interpretation is that Thutmose killed the heir to the throne and used the dream to legitimise his political ambitions. Whatever the case, Thutmose restored the colossus as a monument to the Egyptian empire. He immortalised his dream on a 14-tonne granite stele at the base of the Sphinx's chest.

Subsequent kings were crowned at the site, which became part of a religious cult. Other restorations were carried out by later pharaohs, and by the Romans, the French and the Egyptian government.

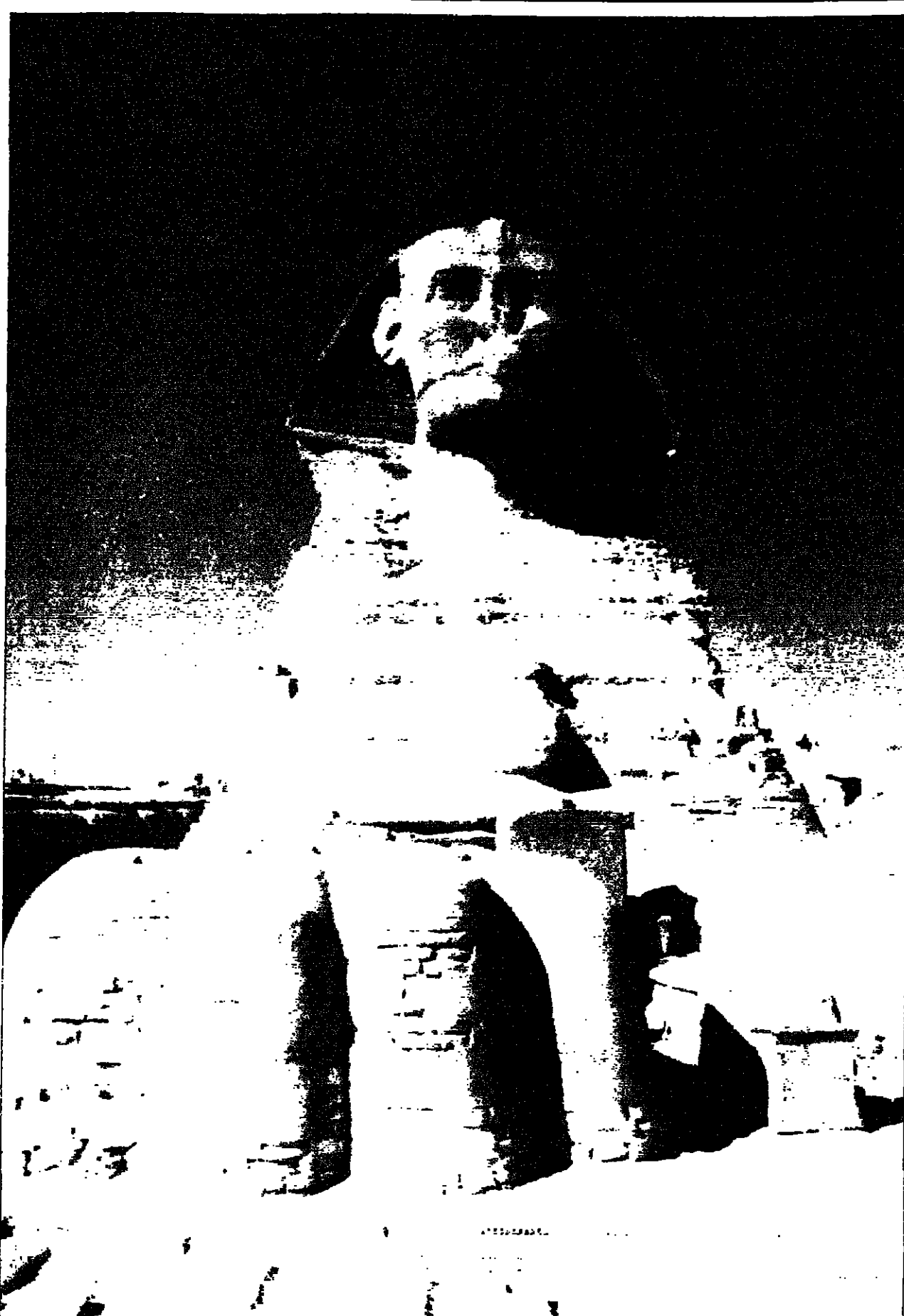
"The Sphinx is the archetype of mystery and antiquity," says archaeologist Mark Lehner of the University of Chicago, who spent five years studying, drawing and photographing every inch of the Sphinx. His work helped lay the basis for the present restoration.

"We look to the past for some kind of answers to how we got where we are," he adds. "There's need to see a secret something that will maybe answer the current dilemmas of the modern age."

Lehner is excavating a site just south of the Sphinx in search of more clues about the builders of the pyramids and their society.

The writer is a print and radio journalist who specialises in social and political issues. She has lived in the Middle East for 12 years.

— Gemini News

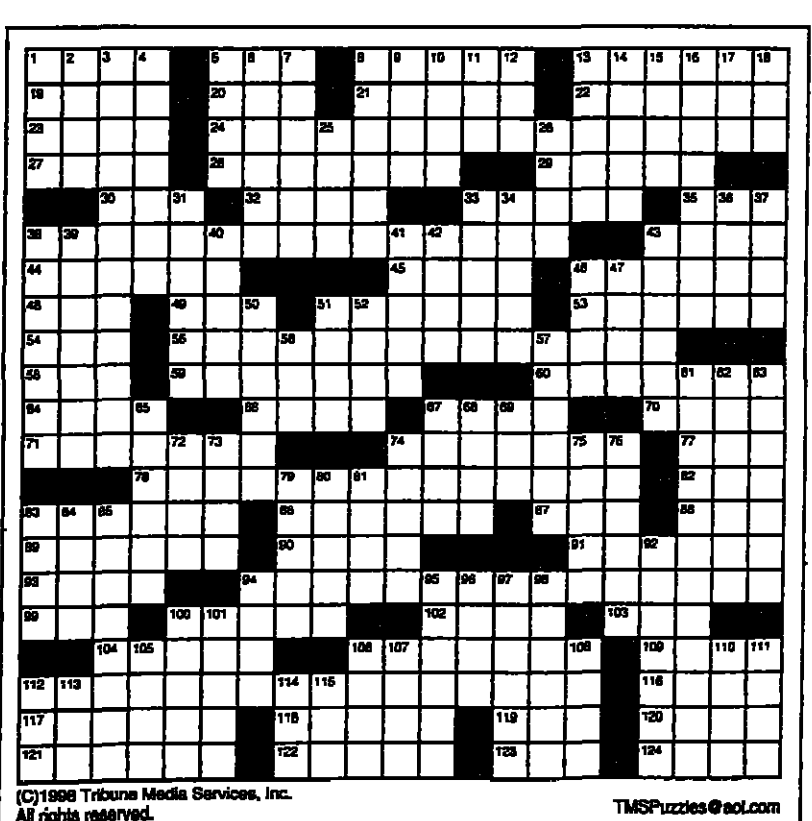


The Saturday Crossword

BACK TO THE WALL

By Susan Delgado, Topeka, Kansas

- ACROSS**
- Promissory notes
 - Big partner?
 - Gas whiff
 - bonafide
 - Pinom
 - Cambridge
 - People of Nigeria
 - Cocoon
 - Andean animals
 - Facet
 - Baseball moment of truth
 - Zeno of
 - Knock off a mount
 - Tahiti resident
 - Civil liberties
 - That a
 - Tapered tucks
 - Singer Damone
 - When the cavalry arrives
 - Hubbub
 - Stick together
 - Upstate rival of Vegas
 - Of nerves
 - Resembling: auct.
 - Marino and
 - Pedro
 - Romero's autocrat
 - Tubb or Trux
 - State of Australia: abbr.
 - Barely avoiding catastrophe
 - Requirement for a U.C. abbr.
 - Visual of hair-care products
 - Publishers
 - Painful
 - Gordy's nation
 - MDs
 - Scheme
 - Eagle-eyed fisherman
 - New York resort
 - Language ending
 - Revealed in the ring
 - Barman portrayer
 - Exposure a flashback
 - Southern phrase
 - Stephen of "The Crying Game"
 - Plz blowp
 - Moose's friends
 - First governor of Alaska
 - "The Reel"
 - McGee's co-star
 - Richard
 - Vocalized, like a melody
 - Moment of truth
 - Sty occupant
- DOWN**
- dict
 - Eyes in Alx
 - Just before the finish
 - Encase a sword
 - Domesticated ox
 - God, in Hebrew
 - Medieval
 - Portuguese port
 - Bee buzzes, e.g.
 - Renowned org.
 - Cluskey died
 - Up until now
 - Warning signal
 - Arm bones
 - Prescription
 - One who eats all
 - Pink
 - Last of a log
 - Honey
 - Employ
 - Glacial pinnacles
 - Shore of songs
 - That's
 - Lupino and Tarsell
 - Stable youngster
 - Frigidity
 - Without
 - Interruption
 - "Glenn Schlicht"
 - soprano
 - Refrigerant
 - Sample a sample
 - Car maintenance
 - check
 - Beatty and
 - Bumline
 - Work units
 - That certain
 - Corp. honchos
 - Noun-forming suffix
 - Drift letters
 - Diane's honcho
 - Michael
 - Critical moment
 - Cas's singing daughter
 - Concerning constellations
 - Pillaging
 - Willie Wonka's
 - Halalini native
 - Sleepy
 - Even siller
 - Friendship
 - Descartes and
 - Rusco
 - Arabian sultanate
 - Graceful owl
 - Diplomacy
 - Some NGOs
 - Feminist Lucrille Coffin
 - Predatory bird
 - File marker
 - Like a little Scotsman
 - Recipe mess.
 - Skid letters



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TMSpuzzles@aol.com

- ANSWERS**
- writer
 - murderer
 - taxi
 - Speak out wildly
 - Holiday preludes
 - Reeked
 - Guinness and
 - Bow and Barton
 - Color changers
 - One over par
 - Chinese currency
 - Speak roughly
 - Pin box
 - Bull of Texas
 - Debut's debut
 - Irish king, Brian
 - Arkansas range
 - Halalini native
 - Sleepy
 - Even siller
 - Friendship
 - Descartes and
 - Rusco
 - Arabian sultanate
 - Graceful owl
 - Diplomacy
 - Some NGOs
 - Feminist Lucrille Coffin
 - Predatory bird
 - File marker
 - Like a little Scotsman
 - Recipe mess.
 - Skid letters

Being the only superpower means never having to say you're sorry

By A. Clare Brandabur
Special to the Jordan Times

THE PRESENT flurry of consultations between the U.S. Secretary of State and the leaders of Israel and the Palestinians in London illustrates all too clearly the damage caused by the refusal to recognise and assign responsibility for the real issues underlying the present crisis. It is futile to pretend that the burning issue is what minuscule percentage of Palestinian land is to be evacuated by Israeli occupation troops or that Madeleine Albright is really going about trying to "bridge the gap between the two sides."

Unless and until the U.S. is willing to admit that years of stunningly unequal treatment by a succession of Washington administrations has created this gap, it is ingenious to pretend Israeli wealth and military power just happened or that the "development" of West Bank and Gazan economies is a natural phenomenon.

Because the U.S. is the sole world superpower, there seems to be a tacit assumption that, though other merely human administrations may undergo self-criticism and require the arduous work of a truth and reconciliation commission, Washington is allowed to go about huffing and puffing in indignation at the failures of others, never confronting its own glaring mistakes. To the eternal credit of South Africa's new government, the crimes of black and white antago-

nists in the struggle against apartheid are being painfully reviewed, and those who are willing to admit their mistakes and to confess them to the world are given amnesty. The U.S. has been as self-righteous as a Puritan schoolmaster in calling for Khmer Rouge murderers to be brought before a world tribunal to answer for the slaughter of millions of Cambodians. But I see no evidence that the U.S. is ready to acknowledge and repent the fact that its moral, military and financial support for Pol Pot, justified by "cold war" expediencies, had the slightest bearing on these tragic events.

Thailand was turned into a brothel to serve U.S. troops during the Viet Nam war. Yet where is the confession of complicity on the part of the responsible decision-makers when Thailand suffers an AIDS epidemic or becomes the victim of child-sex tourist schemes?

Jonas Savimbi could not have continued the insurrection which cost thousands of lives and wasted the wealth of Angola had Henry Kissinger not perversely if covertly continued support long after it was obvious that the country as a whole had opted for a government not to his liking.

Saddam Hussein was able to massacre Kurdish and Shiite rebels because the same illustrious U.S. statesman had manoeuvred to leave him in control of the necessary air power and to withdraw support

from dissident factions who had been promised American backing in their efforts to overthrow the leader. I remember being shocked to see Henry Kissinger on TV saying that we must leave Saddam Hussein enough of his tanks and elite troops to avoid "destabilising the region." (See the recent book by Jonathan Randall on The Kurds: After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness?)

As Christopher Hitchens points out in his excellent book on Cyprus (aptly sub-titled Hostage to History: From the Mongols to Henry Kissinger), it was also Kissinger's connivance with the Turkish generals and the Greek colonels for landing rights at Pireaus on the one hand and air-bases in Turkey on the other which underlay the division of this beautiful long-suffering island.

Where is this admission in the bullying of U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke in his "shuttle diplomacy"? Where is U.S. contrition for the millions of land mines which continue to mutilate civilians in Afghanistan and Cambodia and Viet Nam? Who can charge George Bush or Ms. Albright with mass murder for the deaths of children in Iraq caused by U.S. bombing and U.S. enforced sanctions? Which of the presidents and generals and secretaries of state will stand before the World Court and answer for these crimes?

In Israel there is a sharp division between

the official stance and that of the revisionist historians and the peace activists who have courageously faced up to the atrocities of Israel against the Palestinians from even before the beginning of the Jewish state. The official Netanyahu government continues to maintain the myth of the little Jewish state struggling bravely against a sea of foes. When will Ariel Sharon stand accused before a world court of war crimes for the slaughter of civilians in Lebanon? When will Israel be charged with "war crimes for its torture of political prisoners and the assassinations of Palestinian leaders by death squads? When will Israel be charged in Brussels or anywhere else with ethnic cleansing and genocide?

Since the answer to these rhetorical questions is a cynical laugh, it should not surprise us that, at the very moment when Ms. Albright is trying so hard to "bridge the gap" between Israel and the Palestinians, U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen is meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to offer funding for a whole new generation of military hardware including more millions to be added to the billions already in the works for a third Arrow anti-missile battery.

Jordan industrial park attracts multinationals

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Business executives from around the globe are queuing to set up base in Jordan's industrial park designated by the United States as a free trade zone to foster joint projects with Israel.

Corporate high flyers have been coming in droves, charting appointments with top Jordanian investment officials since the Irbid park was designated by Washington last March as the first qualifying industrial zone (QIZ) with free trade access to U.S. markets.

"There is high demand and some Far East and European-based multinationals have even started registering companies in Jordan to set up projects in the zone," Reem Badran, deputy general manager of the Jordan Investment Corporation, told Reuters.

Under the programme passed to enhance economic cooperation between Jordan and Israel, products with a minimum 20 per cent Israeli production cost

or at least 11.7 per cent component qualify for free trade access to the U.S. market, without reciprocity.

It was passed by Congress in 1996 which authorised U.S. President Bill Clinton to eliminate tariffs on goods produced in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and QIZs in Jordan and Israel.

Ms. Badran said the multinationals which qualify to set up base in the QIZ are attracted by the unrestricted free trade access to the vast U.S. market granted for products manufactured in the zone which meets its criteria.

Some multinationals, talking about investing anything from \$20 million to \$100 million, have worked out deals with Israeli firms to import the necessary raw materials and components.

Among the list of multinationals are Hong Kong-based Boscan International, the Japanese Nishio Iwae conglomerate, U.S. Jordan-based Jeans and Boston-based Matt Industries.

The absence of quotas or customs duties ranging

from 15 to 30 per cent imposed by U.S. authorities should make Jordanian textiles produced in the zone compete even with Vietnam, the world's lowest cost producer, in the U.S. market.

Many Jordanians, who harbour deep-seated apprehensions over Israel's long-term economic and political designs over their country, say the QIZ bodes ill for its future.

They see only one reason why the United States was ready to designate the QIZ — to help Israel make deeper economic inroads into Jordan since a 1994 peace treaty normalised ties.

Loathing any dealings with Israel, they say their country's very survival is at stake through a vulnerable economy's exposure to an influx of Israeli capital.

Others say the QIZ will force weaker local manufacturers to become dependant on Israeli conglomerates and multinationals who enjoy the same status in the zone.

Israeli firms, competing in a global market, have

already set up base in Irbid to tap lower Jordanian labour cost and capital hungry local firms see benefits of tapping Israeli expertise and access to European and U.S. markets.

But a growing minority of business leaders are brushing aside these fears as unwarranted and see the QIZ offering Jordan a real opportunity to transform its economic landscape.

They counter fears of Israeli economic domination, saying the QIZ, which does not require equity joint ventures with Israel, is in fact a boon to Jordan. They point out that Israel already has free trade accords with global trade blocs.

Enthusiasts say the QIZ is putting Jordan on the global investment map and will soon allow it to vie with regional hubs such as Singapore and Jabel Ali in the United Arab Emirates for foreign capital inflows.

They say the fact that multinationals are knocking at Jordan's door in an unprecedented manner testifies to this. They estimate that the

zone could employ as many as 15,000 Jordanians in the next two years alone as many of the projects now in the pipeline come to fruition.

One pioneering company has done more than any other to bring the QIZ concept into reality as decision-makers in Israel, Jordan and Washington grappled with the complex dynamics of underpinning Middle East peace.

Century Investment Group, in only a few years has persuaded multinationals operating in Israel such as Sarah Lee and Motorola to shift to lower cost production in Jordan.

Many say the QIZ evolved from the success of Century, which has close links with Israel-based global giants in joint ventures from batteries to software ventures.

"We will no longer have to export to the U.S. via Israel," said Century Chairman Omar Salah, the leading investor in the Irbid industrial park with 10 of the 57 plants which have filled to capacity the 800-dunum (80 hectare) site.

The QIZ should allow Jordanian firms to export directly to the U.S. market rather than indirectly via Israel as Century has done so far, investors say.

Strong popular opposition to the zone has not put off many Jordanian companies from showing interest in relocating there to take advantage of the customs-free access to the U.S. market, officials say.

A joint Israeli-Jordanian committee in charge of approving eligibility of QIZ products for duty-free access to U.S. markets is expected to approve the first products this week.

Applications for new plots to be allocated in a first phase expansion of the existing zone far outweigh supply.

A land expansion project, to be completed this year, should allow for at least another 50 plants, which officials estimate will generate another 3,000 jobs.

Jordan is also pushing the United States to designate other industrial parks with the same free trade status.

Five banks bid for Jordan airline adviser role

AMMAN (R) — Five global investment banks have submitted bids to act as financial advisers to help the government privatise its loss-making state carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), bankers said Thursday.

The said Citibank, Chase Manhattan, Paribas, Credit Lyonnais and Merrill Lynch responded to RJ's invitation last March to 12 global banks to submit expressions of interest by May 4 to act as financial advisers.

The financial adviser will help the government to implement a World Bank blueprint for a five-stage privatisation programme, which will create a debt-free operating subsidiary to attract an equity strategic partner.

RJ hopes the major restructuring to help restore the financial health of the company, straddled with around JD600 million (\$846 million) of debts mainly due to plane leasing, may be completed by 1999.

They said they expected the technical evaluation of the bids to be completed within RJ's own privatisation committee in June after which a higher government committee is expected to examine the financial bids of the five banks.

Company officials said they also received responses from eight international legal firms among 14 approached at the same time to act in parallel with the financial adviser as legal consultants to the government.

Both the financial adviser and the legal consultant are expected to be chosen within a 90-day period from the original May 4 deadline set for submitting the proposals, bankers said.

Last month the government, after almost two years of indecision, awarded leading Egyptian investment bank EGF Hermes the mandate to act as a financial adviser to a sale of 33 per cent of Jordan Cement Factories Company.

The selection of Hermes, the only regional outfit competing against nine international investment banks, has caused ripples in international investment circles who say such a choice may discourage them from considering Jordan in future deals.

Officials are applying in the choice of financial advisers a World Bank scoring system with weightings for technical and financial proposals, which critics say tilts the balance to the most price competitive.

Government criticised for planning a 10% tax on communication businesses

By Ahmed Naser
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A senior official and a general manager of an Internet service provider (ISP) Friday criticised the government's proposed 10 per cent tax on revenue of communication businesses.

The tax which will be levied on companies' gross revenue — before deduction of expenses and losses — is expected to eat away more than 10 per cent of ISPs' profit.

"It appears that we are not all singing the same tune, when it comes to making communication available to all Jordanians," said the official who asked not to be named.

The official was referring to His Majesty King Hussein's recent initiative to open the Royal Communications dish, Hashem 1, to public and private ISPs at reduced prices.

"The King wants to make communications more accessible to all social classes," the official said. "The government comes along and introduces more taxes to make communications more expensive taking us back to where we started," added the official.

Moreover, the official characterised the government as tax-oriented, saying, "They (the government) are still thinking in short-term... They do not realise the strategic importance of communications to this country."

The government is justifying the tax on the basis that ISPs are competing with the Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) which was taxed before it was privatised.

Abdullah Rifai, JTC's general manager, said the government's claim that the tax was justified because ISPs had taken away revenue from the Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) was "baseless."

He said neither ISPs nor FastLink, the country's sole mobile phone provider, offer services similar to those offered by the JTC which has a monopoly on land-lines and international circuits until the end of 2002.

"If they want to add the 10 per cent tax on my gross revenue, then they might as well give me a licence to offer telephony," Dr. Rifai said.

The JTC currently taxes ISPs for lease-lines and international data-communication circuits

Arab-Chinese investments, trade to be discussed today

AMMAN (J.T) — The board of directors of the Arab-Chinese Chamber of Commerce is due to open a meeting in Amman Saturday with the participation of businessmen from China and the Arab World.

The meeting will focus on Arab-Chinese trade exchanges and investments and will follow up on the implementation of decisions passed by the chamber's previous meetings.

The board members will meet Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and will hold separate meetings with businessmen from Jordan and the Arab World.

According to chamber sources on the eve of the meetings, Arab-Chinese trade is very modest as China's exports to Arab states account for only 2.1 per cent of the overall volume of the country's exports. They said that the Arab World's total exports to China amounts to 1.9 per cent of China's overall imports.

On Sunday, the visiting Bulgarian economic and trade delegation is due to hold a meeting with Jordanian industrialists at the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI).

According to ACI sources, the two sides will discuss prospects for joint investment projects.

The Bulgarian delegation includes exporters of electrical components and equipment and manufacturers of trucks, containers, food processing machinery as well as suppliers of spare parts for mines and agricultural machines.

According to Haidar Murad, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, Jordan last year imported \$14.1 million worth of Bulgarian products and exported \$8.2 million worth of Jordanian goods.

He said the balance of trade could be adjusted by increasing Bulgarian imports from Jordan and launching joint ventures between businesses of the two countries.

The Bulgarian delegation is headed by Reneta Injova, a former Bulgarian prime minister.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You'll have fun this morning just getting your opinion across. Somebody you know and love wants to argue, but don't give up. You can prevail if you persevere. Stay light-hearted. The other person is just in a cranky mood, that's all. Don't make it worse.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Either order those catalogue items or toss the catalogues once and for all. They're starting to take over your house! What's most fun about this weekend is the possibility of working in the garden. This is the perfect time for planting flowers.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Travelling is OK this morning, but not this evening. There could be a problem then, so get to where you're going before dinner. Don't be dismayed. If you're with the right group, you'll have a fabulous time no matter what happens.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) The morning looks hectic, but by this afternoon your biggest dilemma will be where to spend the evening. Should you go to the party or spend the time with one special person? Somebody wants to get you alone, but whether you want to make the commitment is still open to conjecture.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You'll get some of your best ideas this morning from close relatives or neighbours, especially if you're puttering around the house. One of them has run into a similar problem and already has a solution. Don't be shy about requesting help if you need it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You're still in the mood to shop this morning, and you're only interested in the luxury items. Well, if you can find them on sale, you'll be fine. That should be your objective. Be the early bird at the garage sales, too. You could find something valuable for mere pennies.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your best time for finding bargains is early in the morning. You'll also be finding lots of attention, because you're looking good. Busy yourself with financial decisions this evening. If you get a good budget drawn up tonight, you won't have to mess with it again for a while.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Finish paperwork and answer phone messages this morning. By afternoon, you'll be more interested in other things. You'll notice an increase in your resolve then, and maybe an interesting and exciting person who needs a little more of your attention.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your friends want you to go to one thing and your sweetheart wants you to do another. And you're like to be someplace where nobody's nattering at you. If you've got a chore you've been putting off, dive into it. It'll be a perfect excuse not to hang out with any of them.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Comply with an older person's demands this morning. You'll have more time for yourself and your friends this afternoon, but there's a conflict. The group wants you to join them, but a special person wants your time in private. That's where freedom of choice comes in. Which way you go is up to you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Somebody you live with and a close relation, possibly a parent, are having a tiff. You're stuck right in the middle. How do you make them get along? Well, start by making sure each one feels loved. That's probably the basis of their jealousy anyway.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Once you scrape up gas money, you can go for a drive. You may not be able to go far, but if you can get out at all, that would be great. If you have a parent or relative close by, go there. Not only will you get lots of love, you might also get free dinner.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

THSDPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS

- Demonstrates
- Valley plant
- Young adult
- Gusset's comic strip
- Part of TV
- Regarding
- Of birds
- Hearthrob
- Reestablishes
- Belt positions
- Oklahoma city
- Ingrid in "Casablanca"
- Serving dish
- Made longer ago
- Flower like lily of the valley
- Chow
- Roxy music member, once
- Bahrain bigwig
- Suffer with hope
- "Kareena"
- Juniper
- Flavored drink
- Exploit
- Fries lightly
- Spade's "Just Shoot Me" co-star
- Floating casino
- Operative voice
- home (Behold the man!)
- Port on the Volga
- Spacete
- Docked dwelling
- Ice house
- Pot starter
- Besides
- Gas lights
- Garden gate-crasher
- Marsh growth
- Outfit for Chuck Yeager

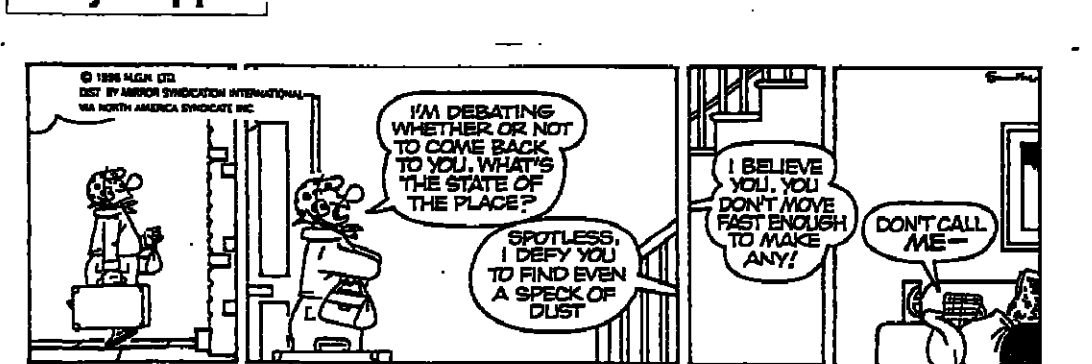
DOWN

- Blemish
- Passess
- Elevator man
- Of any kind at all
- Alternate word
- Got by
- Yours and mine
- Anne des Monts, Que.
- Shoulder warmer
- Of a leg bone
- Son of Seth
- Part of QED
- Seines
- Stone worker
- Steakhouse choice
- Latin way
- Madbox and Norman
- Plant source for best fiber
- Getting the top grade
- Noted violin maker
- Teeth: prof.
- Three tries
- Cook with dry heat
- Bug
- Jug handles
- Inns in Tours
- Blaze of light
- Like a forest canopy
- Humbled
- Aired
- Cavalry sword
- George
- Bernard or Irwin
- Top-notch
- Silent
- Let up
- Ballplayer
- Moises
- Actress
- Anderson
- Missing
- Bluffing cheer

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VERPO
MEERY
PORTSY
CRYLEE

Answer here: AN [] [] [] []

Yesterday's Jumbles: POPPY PUDGY DOUBLE VALISE
Answer: What the ex-mechanic did with his mobile diner — "SOUPED" IT UP

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, A STY IS THIS.

(Answers tomorrow)

Daily

A review of news

Jordan Electric Power JD20m. distribute

FOLLOWING THE approval of the general assembly during an extraordinary meeting, the Jordan Electric Power Corporation (JEPCO) has decided to raise its capital from JD15 million to JD20 million by capitalizing JD5 million of ordinary and special reserves as well as premiums from previous liquidations of shares. As a result of the increase in capital, the shareholders will be awarded new shares after ten days from the completion of the registration of the shares in the Jordan Securities Commission.

The general assembly also approved during an ordinary session the distribution of JD1 million in dividends at a rate of 10 per cent. The company posted a JD20.5 million gross profit last year after accounting for production costs and other expenditures, the net after-tax profit stood at JD3.20 million, 0.21 per cent higher than the 1996 figure. The corporation registered an 8.76 per cent increase in its total JD21.06 million at the end of 1997. Other earnings obtained by JEPCO amounted to JD26.7 million.

According to the annual report, JEPCO's total assets at the end of last year stood at JD179.4 million, 3.3 per cent higher than the 1996 total of the amount. JEPCO's million were current assets which were 6.9 per cent less than the figure posted in 1996. Net fixed assets were higher by 10.17 per cent at the end of 1997. The liabilities and the shareholders' equity were both higher by 5.43 per cent and 4.57 per cent totaling JD122.9 million and JD26.83 million.

REUTERS The Business

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
US Dollar	-	1.7708	0.6716	1.477
DE Mark	0.5647	-	0.3444	0.504
GB Sterling	1.5372	2.9001	-	2.426
CH Franc	0.6782	119.71	0.4126	-
JP Yen	0.0078	1.3331	0.4888	1.173
CA Dollar	0.5893	1.2919	0.4238	1.008
IT Lira	0.0006	1.2138	0.3404	0.884
NL Guilder	0.5013	58.72	0.3088	74.16
FR Franc	0.1685	0.2961	0.1627	34.36

Middle Eastern

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAB
US Dollar	-	0.7080	2.7864	0.377
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2887	0.531
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1890	-	0.1698
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8908	0.3408	-
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0382	0.503
Kuwait Dinar	3.2787	2.3246	12.3684	1.238
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	0.1938
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4888	2.4781	0.348
Egyptian	0.2927	0.2078	1.0978	0.1104

Energy

Oil	Last	Review
Brent	13.98	13.73
N. Texas	15.33	16.22
Bonny	13.98	13.73
Dubai	12.93	12.73
UL Gas	156.00	156.00

JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Dollar	1.1747	1.1806
DE Mark	0.4002	0.4022
CH Franc	0.4804	0.4828
JP Yen	0.1194	0.12
CA Dollar	0.5307	0.5334
IT Lira	0.3554	0.3572
FR Franc	0.4459	0.4478

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Main Equity Index

Bourse	Index	Value
New York	DOW JONES	5978.32
New York	S&P 500	1108.54
London	FT-SE 100	5988.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	10149
Paris	CAC 40	3908.35
Frankfurt	DAX	8287.58

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Jordan Electric Power Company raises capital to JD20m, distributes JD1.6m dividends

**** FOLLOWING THE approval of the general assembly during an extraordinary meeting, the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO) has decided to raise its capital from JD15 million to JD20 million by capitalising JD5 million of voluntary and special reserves as well as premiums from previous issuances of shares. As a result of the increase in capital, the shareholders will be awarded free bonus shares after ten days from completing the registration of the shares at the Jordan Securities Commission.**

The general assembly also approved during an ordinary session the distribution of JD1.6 million in dividends at a rate of 11 per cent. The company posted a JD20.3 million gross profit last year but, after accounting for production costs and other expenditures, the net after-tax profit stood at JD3.20 million, 0.71 per cent higher than the 1996 figure. The operational earnings achieved by the company registered an 8.76 per cent increase as it totalled JD121.06 million at the end of 1997. Other earnings obtained by JEPCO amounted to JD0.7 million.

According to the annual report, JEPCO's total assets at the end of last year stood at JD179.4 million, 5.3 per cent higher than the 1996 total of the amount, JD45.6 million were current assets which were 6.9 per cent less than the figure posted in 1996. Net fixed assets were higher by 10.17 per cent as they totalled JD130.6 million at the end of 1997. The liabilities and the shareholders equity were both higher by 5.43 per cent and 4.57 per cent totalling JD152.9 million and JD26.53 million respectively.

Board Chairman Issam Bdeir told the general assembly that within the 1997-2001 five-year plan, the company is expected to complete building and electrifying some main transmission stations this year in addition to setting up and electrifying new transmission stations. The work expected to be implemented in 1998 will cost about JD12.3 million out of a total cost estimated at JD68 million for all the projects during the five-year plan.

The annual report revealed that power purchased during 1997 was 5.66 per cent higher than 1996 when the quantity purchased was 9.2 per cent higher than the 1995 figure. The average per capita power consumption during 1997 amounted to 1086 kilowatt hour compared to 1065 kilowatt hour during 1996.

Furthermore, the company installed 27,024 new electricity metres compared to 25,171 metres during 1996. By including this number, the total number of JEPCO subscribers reaches 482,228 compared to 455,204 subscribers in 1996. JEPCO's power is mostly consumed in Amman and Zarqa as the rate is 67.3 per cent and 21 per cent respectively. Salt, Madaba and Baqa'a consume 3.3 per cent, 4.6 per cent and 3.8 per cent of JEPCO's power.

Residential and public buildings consume about 42 per cent of electric power while industrial projects account for 23 per cent. Commercial establishments, hotels, restaurants, radio and TV take 17 per cent of electric power (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

AFM trading declines on lack of major contracts

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Due to lack of major contracts, turnover at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) dropped last week compared with the previous week, a broker said Friday.

The stock market's weekly bulletin indicated that last week's turnover amounted to JD4.9 million compared to JD11.4 million a week ago, a decrease of 57 per cent.

The bulletin showed that 3.5 million shares changed hands during the past week with an average daily turnover of JD1.3 million compared to JD2.9 million

in the previous week. The overall trading was conducted through 2,105 contracts.

Naim Nageeb, a broker at the AFM, said that no major contracts were recorded in past week's trading compared with the previous week when several million worth of contracts, mainly for the Arab Bank, were registered.

Mr. Nageeb told the Jordan Times that dealers were concentrating on the shares of the Arab, Housing and Islamic banks.

He added that more than 550,000 shares of the Islamic Bank were traded at the AFM "due to the

decrease in their share prices which prompted investors to buy more shares."

The broker noted that trading in the industrial sector focused on the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company due to the annual meeting which was scheduled to take place on Thursday. Each shareholder was expected to receive a free bonus share.

Demand was also high for the shares of the Jordan Cement Factories Company which won dealers' attention due to the low prices of the shares.

Mr. Nageeb indicated that shares of several industrial

firms were not traded due to the "negative" results they announced during the past week.

The broker confirmed reports that several foreign portfolios resorted to sell large numbers of shares but noted that it was normal "phenomenon."

"Foreign portfolios are investing according to a particular predesigned plan," Mr. Nageeb said.

The AFM bulletin indicated that the lion's share of the turnover were captured by the industrial sector with a JD2.4 million, or 48.8 per cent.

The banking sector ranked second with JD2.2 million, or 45.1 per cent,

followed by services sector with JD280,000 or 5.7 per cent and finally the insurance sector with JD18,000 or 0.4 per cent.

The general price index (GPI) also recorded a decrease of 1.29 point, or .76 per cent. The bulletin indicated that the GPI in the past week's trading was 169.03 point compared to 170.32 point a week ago.

Out of the 87 firms whose shares have changed hands in the past week's trading, share prices of 17 companies recorded increase, 41 registered a decrease while shares of 29 firms witnessed no change in their prices.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (02/05/1998 - 06/05/1998)
WEEKLY REPORT

TRADING THE LAST 3 WEEKS	COMPANY NAME	P/R	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
55,500	343,000 ARAB BANK	14.5	1.13	97	1580	274120	175.00	177.50	170.00	177.00 + 2.00	173.494	4
1,830	1,670 JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.8	4.12	16	3452	5853	1.73	1.71	1.69	1.70 - .03	1.696	1
1,350	1,250 BANK OF JORDAN	4.2	0.00	1	1000	1340	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.340	1
1,950	920 MID. EAST DEV. BK.	57.8	6.00	4	7130	6306	.92	.92	.88	.88 - .04	.882	2
1,830	1,600 JORDANIAN DEV. BK.	18.5	8.81	11	7850	12540	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.600	1
6,030	5,320 THE HOUSING BK.	18.5	3.43	267	130613	784873	6.03	6.16	5.75	5.83 - .20	6.007	2
1,850	1,790 JOR. KHALIL BANK	9.0	0.00	13	2428	4413	1.83	1.83	1.80	1.83 - .03	1.818	1
1,690	640 JOR. GOLF BANK	3.9	10.61	11	6400	4239	.67	.67	.66	.66 - .01	.662	3
2,660	2,660 ARAB JOR. DEV. BK.	50.2	2.02	2	200	494	2.60	2.67	2.47	2.47 - .20	2.470	1
1,950	1,790 JOR. KHALIL BANK	18.5	8.81	11	7850	12540	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.600	1
1,800	1,610 JOR. DEV. BANK	9.8	0.00	4	600	918	1.61	1.53	1.53	1.53 - .08	1.530	2
1,890	810 MISTAL-NAL (BRIQMA)	4.0	0.00	2	2350	1934	.82	.83	.82	.83 + .01	.823	1

TRADING THE LAST 3 WEEKS	COMPANY NAME	P/R	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
2,700	2,700 JORDAN INSURANCE	11.6	5.56	1	1000	2700	2.70	2.70	2.70	2.70	2.700	1
1,040	1,000 ARABIAN SHAS INSUR.	54.9	0.00	4	3455	3425	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.000	1
2,220	2,050 JOR. PRAIRIE INSUR.	6.0	11.76	8	5150	10949	2.14	2.14	2.13	2.13 - .01	2.126	2
2,200	2,200 PRIZADALPETA INSUR.	10.1	0.00	2	427	897	2.20	2.10	2.10	2.10 - .10	2.101	1

TRADING THE LAST 3 WEEKS	COMPANY NAME	P/R	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
940	910 EXPORT & PIM. SH. 75X	14.8	0.00	5	2150	1551	.91	.91	.91	.91 - .01	.960	2
330	310 CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	-	0.00	2	250	78	.31	.31	.31	.31	.312	1
410	390 JOR. TRADE PAC.	-	0.00	14	23800	9758	.41	.41	.41	.41	.410	1
450	530 MACH. EXP. REST. NATN.	27.4	0.00	16	54050	27188	.53	.53	.50	.50 - .03	.503	4
430	390 ARAB PIM. INVEST.	-	0.00	42	78500	31607	.41	.41	.40	.40 - .01	.400	3
780	750 DITON DEV. 50X	9.9	0.00	21	74222	18555	.75	.75	.75	.75	.750	3
670	450 AL-DAMLIYAN	39.2	0.00	5	7000	4538	.67	.67	.67	.67	.670	3
1,010	1,000 AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	352.1	0.00	11	85340	85339	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.000	3
2,000	1,620 CENTURY INV. GROUP	-	0.00	11	11500	17765	1.62	1.62	1.50	1.53 - .09	1.545	1
470	450 ARAB FOOD & MFG.	-	0.00	34	70152	32205	.45	.49	.46	.49 + .04	.473	2
370	340 ARAB TEXT. DEV. IND.	38.2	0.00	10	31500	7882	.34	.34	.34	.34	.340	4
340	330 KHAL. TEXTILE	200.0	0.00	11	5850	1862	.34	.32	.31	.31 - .03	.313	2
630	600 MIDEAST PHARM. 90X	-	0.00	9	3229	1614	.60	.60	.60	.60	.600	3
440	400 ARAB ELECT. INDUS.	-	0.00	1	450	185	.40	.41	.41	.41 + .01	.411	1
1,650	1,540 UNION TOBACCO 87.5X	9.7	8.22	7	5742	8052	1.54	1.53	1.52	1.52 - .02	1.402	3
790	670 RAGI PHARM.	-	0.00	10	31500	7882	.67	.69	.68	.68 - .01	.684	1
300	410 ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	-	0.00	28	29484	18757	.61	.64	.64	.64	.636	4
300	270 IND. ENG.	-	0.00	16	23550	6594	.28	.28	.28	.28	.280	3
510	490 IND. CERAMIC	12.8	0.00	7	2500	1200	.50	.49	.49	.49 - .01	.480	2
400	400 PEARL SAM. P. CONV.	-	0.00	6	29130	11652	.40	.40	.40	.40	.400	2
400	480 KHAL. POLYMER	-	0.00	82	525200	28970	.57	.57	.52	.52 - .05	.541	5
510	380 OPTICALS BEARING 75X	-	0.00	8	6890	2223	.58	.58	.57	.58	.578	3
1,000	850 READY MIX CONCRETE	9.0	0.00	1	2250	1890	.85	.84	.84	.84	.840	1
1,100	1,030 NUTRIDAR	2614.4	0.00	29	13898	14121	1.05	1.04	1.00	1.00 - .05	1.016	2
870	820 EXPRAL PRINT CO. 75X	12.5	9.24	5	9750	5558	.82	.82	.82	.82	.870	2
380	340 KHAL. WOL. ENG. NAMICO	-	0.00	153	529225	215149	.37	.44	.37	.44 + .07	.407	1

GRAND TOTAL 595 1689109 837408

REUTERS The Business of Information

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7708	0.8108	1.4788	132.75	1.4382	1748.38	1.9948	5.3380	
DE Mark	0.5847	1.0000	0.3445	75.00	0.8106	986.99	1.1288	3.3825	
GB Sterling	1.6372	2.9001	1.0000	2.4204	217.62	2.3813	2889.82	8.7196	
CH Franc	0.6762	1.1971	0.4126	100.79	0.9706	1180.82	134.36	4.0130	
JP Yen	0.0078	1.3331	0.4885	1.1131	1.0811	13.18	150.23	4.4705	
CA Dollar	0.6863	1.2918	0.4225	1.0888	1.08	1270.80	1.4851	4.3285	
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0138	0.3484	0.0846	1917.18	0.8220	11.42	3.3892	
NL Guilder	0.5013	0.8872	0.3088	74.10	86.48	874.83	-	2.9751	
FR Franc	0.1685	0.2881	0.1027	24.8810	22.33	0.2417	33.59	33.6900	

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
US Dollar	0.7090	3.7804	0.3770	3.8405	0.3050
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	5.2887	0.6317	5.1347	0.4302
Saudi Riyal	0.2868	0.1890	0.1005	0.0813	0.98
Bahraini Dinar	2.65	1.8808	0.9488	9.66	0.8091
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	0.1032	1.0302	0.0838
Kuwait Dinar	3.2787	2.2246	1.2264	1.2360	11.84
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	0.1021	1.0212	0.0830
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4688	0.2481	2.4055	0.2015
Egyptian	0.2327	0.2078	0.1087	1.0883	1.0751

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1747	1.1806
DE Mark	0.4092	0.4022
CH Franc	0.4804	0.4828
FR Franc	0.1194	0.12
JP Yen	0.0307	0.0334
NL Guilder	0.3854	0.3872
IT Lira	0.4088	0.4075

Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	P/C
DOW JONES	9078.82	100.14	1.12	9088.29	8971.2	8975.68
S&P 500	1108.54	14.4	1.31	1109.74	1094.53	1095.14
FT-SE 100	5989.8	31.8	0.54	5977.7	5988.5	5938
Nikkei 225	15148	5.97	0.04	15208.8	15096.7	15143
CAC 40	3906.36	-41.09	-1.04	3943.3	3900.17	3947.46
DAX	6257.88	71.35	1.38	6260.85	6218.35	6188.23

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Victories put Jazz and Pacers two steps ahead

SALT LAKE CITY (AFP) — Karl Malone forced overtime, then got the go-ahead basket as Utah again held off San Antonio for a 109-106 win and a 2-0 lead in their National Basketball Association playoffs second-round series on Thursday.

Malone shot just 10-of-26 from the field but made two of the biggest baskets of the game. With 16 seconds left in regulation, he powered into David Robinson and flipped in a shot to move the Jazz into a 98-98 tie, although he missed the ensuing free throw.

Utah trailed by three points midway through overtime before John Stockton hit a jumper with 2:31 remaining. Malone gave the Jazz the lead for good at 102-101 with a 16-footer over Tim Duncan with 1:17 to play. Malone had 22 points and 12 rebounds and Stockton collected 18 points and 12 assists for the Jazz, who have sweated out buzzer shots by the Spurs in each of the first two games, winning by a combined four points.

Duncan, the Rookie of the Year who twisted his left ankle early in overtime, scored 26 points, but none in the extra session. Robinson added 21 and 14 rebounds for San Antonio, which wasted a handful of solid opportunities late in the game.

Games Three and Four in the best-of-seven Western Conference semifinal are Saturday and Sunday at San Antonio, Texas.

The New York Knicks will also go home down two games-to-none after losing to the Pacers in Indianapolis.

Patrick Ewing returned for the Knicks, but Rik Smits returned to All-Star form for the Pacers, bouncing back from an awful series opener to score 22 points in an 85-77 triumph.

Ewing, the cornerstone of the Knicks' franchise, played for the first time since dislocating his right wrist on December 20 and had 10 points and five rebounds, but couldn't off-



New York Knicks center Patrick Ewing works his way to the basket guarded by Indiana Pacers forward Antonio Davis. Ewing, playing for the first time since December 20, 1997, scored 10 points. The Pacers won 85-77, to take a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference semifinal series (Reuters photo)

set Smits.

"It wasn't a perfect night, but it's coming back, at least," Smits said. "Normally I would be disappointed with 8-for-18 shooting but where I came from, I'm satisfied. The win is the main thing. We got that."

Antonio Davis had a crucial offensive rebound, two free throws and a key block in the final seconds for Indiana, who took a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference semifinal series.

Despite the absence of Ewing in Game One, Smits shot just 3-of-19 from the field. But the return of Ewing seemed to

motivate Smits, who did not allow Ewing to get started and had an answer for every New York surge in the fourth quarter.

Ewing's third and final basket pulled the Knicks within 79-77 with 45 seconds left. Indiana's Reggie Miller, who scored 21 points, missed a turnaround jumper, but Davis grabbed the rebound and was fouled with 28 seconds to go.

After making both free throws, Davis blocked a drive by John Starks at the other end. Game One heroes Jalen Rose and Travis Best added two free throws apiece to seal the win as the Pacers

improved to 4-0 at home in the playoffs.

"Sometimes this game comes down to a key offensive rebound," Pacers coach Larry Bird said. "Tony stepped up and helped us out a lot with that and made a couple free throws."

John Starks scored 20 points and Allan Houston added 16 for the Knicks, who host Games Three and Four on Saturday and Sunday.

Forward Larry Johnson also returned from a two-game suspension for fighting and scored 15 points, including 10 in the third quarter, when New York briefly took the lead.

WORLD CUP '98

Bonev looking to mix youth with experience

PARIS (AFP) — Four times Bulgarian footballer of the year, Hristo Bonev has his work cut out to try and repeat his side's 1994 World Cup success when they reached the semi-finals.

When the 50-year-old took over in 1996 after Bulgaria failed to reach the finals of Euro '96, he was met by a mini players strike over the sacking of former coach Dimitar Penev.

Worse still it was led by Bulgaria's star striker Hristo Stoichkov who Bonev promptly ignored for several months.

But with the World Cup

looming Bonev, who has coached Greek side Panathinaikos and APOEL Nicosia, and Stoichkov made their peace.

However, Bonev knows that his aging stars desperately need some young legs to join them.

"We have had a generation of young players, who are still a force at international level. I know however what a long tournament this will be and we must have some youth in the squad. I have a number of players who are beginning to show what they can do," says Bonev.

Bonev is certainly no



stranger to international football.

As a player, the former striker won 96 caps during his ten year reign between 1967 and 1977, scoring 47 goals.

Most of his club career was spent with Lokomotiv Plovdiv when he made a Bulgarian record 410 appearances, scoring 206 goals.

Asprilla racing against time

PARIS (AFP) — Faustino Asprilla is racing against time to be ready to play for Colombia at France 98.

And the success or otherwise of the Colombian team may well depend on whether the mercurial striker wins that race or not.

Coach Hernan Dario Gomez has no doubts about the importance of Asprilla to his team's chances. "Even if he is only 60 percent fit we will take him to France," said Gomez. "He is one of those players who cannot be replaced."

At 28, Asprilla is an enigma. A hugely talented ball player who is also a consistent goalscorer, who is one of the few Colombians who has been a success playing in Europe.

Playing in his second World Cup finals, he was one of the stars of Colombia's qualifying performances, scoring seven goals — including six in the first five matches — despite missing four games

through injury. No other Colombian player scored more than three goals.

Asprilla was a huge success in Italy with Parma, whom he joined in 1992. He won UEFA Cup, European Cup Winners' Cup and European Super Cup honours before joining Newcastle in February 1996 for \$12 million. He rejoined Parma in January for a \$10.8 million fee, but has hardly played since.

While Asprilla's talent is undoubted, his temperament is suspect. He has been suspended at club and national team level for various moments of indiscipline and enraged manager Kenny Dalglish when he was at Newcastle by returning late from national team duty.

Asprilla is a star and behaves like one. He is slightly crazy, certainly, but it is the craziness of a genius. Newcastle have certainly missed him since his mid-season departure. It is a long way from a 3-1

European Champions League win over Barcelona (with Asprilla scoring twice) to a 0-0 FA Cup draw with non-league Stevenage.

Asprilla has an understanding with coach Gomez, under whom he played at Nacional before departing to Parma. In 1993, after Asprilla was dropped and vowed never to play for Colombia again, it was Gomez who got him reinstated.

It is his fitness record, though, that must concern Colombia the most.

He missed several weeks at the start of this season after undergoing a stomach operation and was then not suited fit when he joined Parma. He soon suffered a leg muscle injury that has continued to plague him, even though he returned to action in early May.

Asprilla's record of 15 goals in 39 international appearances and his love of the big match stage are the reasons for Gomez's patience.

Fulham dream still alive; insists Keegan

LONDON (AFP) — Kevin Keegan insisted Fulham's five-year plan to get into the English Premiership remained on track despite the surprise sacking of manager Ray Wilkins on Thursday.

Wilkins, a star player with Chelsea, Manchester United, AC Milan, Paris St Germain and Glasgow Rangers, was dismissed just two days before the London club take on Grimsby in the Second Division play-off semi-finals.

The former Queens Park Rangers boss, 41, only took charge at Craven Cottage last September after Mohamed Al Fayed, owner of London department store Harrods, took control of the club.

But despite taking the club into the play-offs, former England midfielder Wilkins had his contract terminated with immediate effect with chief operating officer Keegan taking charge of team affairs.

Fulham have spent almost eight million pounds (\$13 million) on players since Al Fayed's takeover, including Blackburn's Chris Coleman, Paul Peschisolidi, Tony Thorpe and Southampton's Malik Taylor. But they only scraped into the final Division Two play-off place on goals scored after Gillingham failed to win their last home game of the season.

Falling giants Everton must win — and then pray

LONDON (AFP) — It was not long ago that Everton were one of the most feared teams in England — but by the final whistle on Sunday the Merseysiders could find themselves condemned to relegation from the Premiership.

Their destiny is not even in their own hands as the fallen giants currently occupy the third relegation spot going into the final match of the season. Should fourth bottom Bolton win at Chelsea then Howard Kendall's side will be travelling to Bury, Stockport and Port Vale next season rather than Arsenal, Manchester United and Liverpool.

Their decline has not been sudden and at the end of the past few seasons they have been fighting for survival when once they were fighting for trophies.

Money has not been the problem as the club has spent as heavily on new players as any other club in the cash-rich Premiership. But the quality of players they have bought has been questioned by critics.

Only Liverpool (18), Manchester United (11) and Arsenal (11) have won more league titles than Everton (9), but the Goodison Park outfit must now win at home to Coventry and pray that Bolton fail to win if they are to survive.

"It's out of our hands now," concedes beleaguered boss Kendall. "Relegation is certainly not unthinkable. It should be, but it isn't, and that's shown in the club's record over the past few seasons."

"They'd have gone down if Middlesbrough hadn't had three points deducted last season, and again if they hadn't beaten Wimbledon on the final day in 1994."

Kendall considers the current season the most difficult of his long managerial career. The trauma of two previous departures from Everton, a relegation shambles at Manchester City to sort out and a crisis-ridden Sheffield United to contend with are nothing in comparison with his current plight.

Last week's predictable defeat to Arsenal, who clinched the title with a 4-0 win, opened the trap door further, but Kendall believes his much-criticised team can still survive.

He said: "All the players here want to be

Premiership players next season just like I want to be a Premiership manager.

"We are going to do our utmost to make sure that happens. It has not been easy; it has been a traumatic season in lots of ways."

"It has been probably the most difficult season I have had in club management. The number of injuries, suspensions, transfers have made it a very unsettling time, and we just want it over with and make sure we are safe."

Everton have also expressed fears that Chelsea may field a weakened team against Bolton in order to rest their stars for Wednesday's European Cup Winners' Cup final against Stuttgart in Stockholm.

Bolton centre-half Gerry Taggart, though, believes the strength of Chelsea's squad means that it will be a tough game whoever plays.

"They've been rotating their squad all season and they have such a big squad that even if they leave out seven first-team players, they can still bring in another seven with first-team experience," he said.

"Whoever plays will also be keen to do well and maybe keep their place for the European Final."

With the Championship sewn up by Arsenal last weekend, attention shifts not just to the relegation issue but also to the fight for places in next season's UEFA Cup.

Third-placed Liverpool, who are away to Derby, are already assured of a place as are Chelsea, who will create an extra place for English clubs in Europe's second club competition if they win the Cup Winners Cup final against Stuttgart later this month.

Fifth-placed Leeds, home to Wimbledon, are virtually assured of a place, leaving Blackburn, Aston Villa, Leicester and West Ham to scrap for the other two or three places.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Basler excluded from medical tests

BONN (AFP) — Bayern Munich's German international midfielder 'Super' Mario Basler said on Friday he was astonished at not being included in the group of players called up by national coach Bertie Vogts to undergo medical tests this week. "I am absolutely astonished that I was not invited, especially as I was injured for six weeks with injured left ankle ligaments," the 29-year-old said. Basler, who was forced to return home early from Euro '96 when he failed to recover from a foot injury, was under no illusions about the significance of being left out of the group. "Those players who won't be going to the World Cup finals have no need of undergoing the examinations," Basler said. "However, I'm not going to kill myself if I don't make the World Cup squad," he added.

Ferguson releases his first ever signing

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Toppled English Premiership champions Manchester United released their veteran former Scotland international Brian McClair here on Friday. The 34-year-old, who scored two goals in 30 international appearances, became manager Alex Ferguson's first signing for Manchester United 11 years ago when he joined for £850,000 (\$1.25 million) from Scottish giants Celtic. McClair, who was signed by Ferguson after he had scored a remarkable 35 goals in 44 matches for Celtic in the 1986-87 season, enjoyed his best season with United in the following campaign scoring 24 goals in 40 matches. He was also a vital member of the teams that won the 1991 Cup Winners Cup, three FA Cups and four Premiership titles during the 90's. McClair, who had a £400,000 testimonial last season, said he was determined to find another club. "I

have two good years left in me and will try to find another club," he said.

Lacombe replaces Giresse at Toulouse

TOULOUSE (AFP) — Guy Lacombe, who was a member of the French side that won Olympic gold in the 1984 Olympic Games, was appointed the new manager of French First Division side Toulouse here on Friday. The 42-year-old Lacombe, who also won the French title as a player with Nantes in 1976-77, replaces Alain Giresse who left on Monday to coach French Cup winners Paris Saint Germain. According to press reports Lacombe, who coached Cannes from 1989-97 and took them into the first division in 1995, signed a two year contract with Toulouse.

Hard Davis Cup tie for Britain

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's Davis Cup tie against India in the World Group Qualifying Round is to be staged on a hard court at Nottingham from September 25 to 27 it was announced on Friday. British captain David Lloyd was considering playing the match on grass but elected for the artificial surface for two reasons. September is a little late for grass court play, particularly if the weather is bad, and India, like Britain, are a grass court nation and would not be under any disadvantage. Both Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman, Britain's two leading players, are at their best on hard or fast courts and, although it is not quite the same surface, the Nottingham court will be similar to the U.S. Open, in which Rusedski, the Canadian born British number one, was runner-up last year. Victory will put Britain into the World Group of the top 16 nations for the first time since 1993, but defeat would leave them in the Euro/African Zone Group One.

Premier to rest

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Jordan Football Association (JFA) official Friday indicated that the Premier League Championship will resume following reports that the boycotting clubs had agreed to recommence their season.

Ruslan Harun, a JFA member, said that the seven clubs that had suspended their participation were expected to issue a statement today Sunday declaring their stand to resume their participation in the PL.

Harun said he expected the country's most popular sports event to start on Thursday.

"I am sure that the seven clubs will give their decision and reject the boycotts."

The clubs had decided to suspend their participation demanding that the sales revenue be distributed equally among the 10 PL clubs, irrespective of the number of fans attending each club's matches.

The clubs came up with the demand after the JFA last month agreed an agreement to market and sell all PL matches in return for a \$200,000 fee.

The dispute erupted following a demand by Al Farsah, Al Ramtha, Al

and 1996 World Cup

ward into the final of football wars.

Members of the select will be over teams packed for comments.

Europe: Yashin Beckenbauer (West Germany), Moore (England), (Italy), Baresi (Italy), (Holland), Platini (France), (Portugal), Puskas (Hungary), van Basten (Holland), South American

teens battle in home quarterfinal

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Premier League expected to resume Thursday

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Jordan Football Association (JFA) official Friday predicted that the Premier League (PL) Championship will resume soon following reports that the boycotting clubs had agreed to reconsider their decision.

Bassam Haroun, a JFA member, said that the seven clubs that had suspended their participation were expected to issue a statement today (Saturday) declaring their stand to resume their participation in the PL contest.

Haroun said he expected the country's most popular sports event to restart on Thursday.

"I am sure that the seven clubs will review their decision and rejoin the PL contests."

The clubs had decided to suspend their participation demanding that ticket sales revenue be distributed equally among the 10 PL clubs, irrespective of the number of fans attending each club's matches.

The clubs came up with the demand after the JFA last month signed an agreement to market and sell PL matches in return for a JD300,000.

The dispute erupted following a demand by Al Faisali, Al Ramtha, Al

Ahli, Kufrum, Al Arabi, Al Hussein and Al Qadisiyyah clubs in which they requested an amendment of the 1997 formula that governs the allocation of the JFA's competitions revenue.

The 1997 ticket sales distribution formula stipulates that 35 per cent of the revenues be allocated to the two competing clubs, 35 per cent to the remaining clubs, 9 per cent for marketing purposes, 2 per cent to maintain football grounds in the Kingdom and the rest for the JFA.

Two clubs, Al Wihdat and Shabbab Al Hussein, declined to support this demand and hinted that any change of the present formula would prompt a "reconsideration" of their stand of competing in the PL Championship.

Al Jazireh Club was the only party that refrained from supporting any of the two sides.

"There is no room for any change on the formula that governs the distribution of ticket sales among the 10 clubs. We are not ready to make any changes," Haroun told the Jordan Times.

"We have made several concessions to them which were beyond their expectations and I believe that they will reconsider their stand soon," he added.

The JFA's official was referring to the recommendations made by the

association on Tuesday where they agreed to distribute 80 per cent of ticket sales among the 10 clubs.

They also agreed to give the clubs 50 per cent of the revenues received from the television coverage of the JFA's contests.

The recommendations submitted by a special JFA committee also noted that the revenues levied from the matches played in the Golden Quartet, the contest among the big four, will be allocated among these clubs only.

"I believe that giving them such concessions was beyond their dreams," Haroun noted.

He emphasised that the JFA declined to approve the cancellation of dual punishment, where clubs were fined a sum ranging between JD50 to JD100 if one of their players receives a red card booking during a match.

"This norm had been in force since a long time and it was unwise to cancel it. If we do, the players will be reckless and commit more violation to the soccer rules during the matches," he added.

"But we decided that this demand by the seven clubs be reviewed by a three-man committee which will then take a final decision," Haroun added.

Muster, Kuerten win, Chang loses

HAMBURG (AP) — A little less technicolour. Gustavo Kuerten is beginning to make his presence felt on red clay as he prepares to defend his French Open title later this month. And the samba bands are there too.

Kuerten overcame a brief second-set lapse and beat Hicham Arazi 6-1, 4-6, 6-2 on Thursday to reach the quarterfinals of the French Open, a major tuneup for the French Open, the second Grand Slam event of the year that starts May 25.

Thomas Muster, a former French Open champion, also breezed into the quarterfinals, but the 1989 winner Michael Chang rumbled out.

In his yellow-and-blue outfit and a laid-back attitude, "Guga" came from nowhere last year to win the French Open and that remains his only career title. He's had a modest year so far, reaching the quarterfinals at the Super 9 event in Key Biscayne.

Kuerten is now sporting a little more subdued outfit. The shirt is predominantly yellow and resembles the one worn by Brazil's soccer team. The shorts are black and the shoes remain yellow.

In his match against Arazi, who reached the quarterfinals at Roland Garros last year, Kuerten displayed the deft touch and the punishing ground strokes that carried him to the title in Paris.

He began the match by breaking Arazi's serve and breezed through the first set. The Moroccan ended the second set by breaking Kuerten's serve.

But the fifth-seeded Brazilian again broke for a 1-0 lead and cruised home to win in one hour, 29 minutes.

By reaching the quarterfinals of the \$ 2.45 million event, Kuerten posted his best performance on clay



Michael Chang

this year. "In practice, I am playing very well but in matches I have to be more consistent," Kuerten said.

"I played two very good sets today, but I let my game drop in the second. I am getting stronger mentally," he said.

"I had to do a lot to win today, I had to run a lot. A win like this is very good for the confidence," said Kuerten, who had samba dancers waiting for him after the match.

Kuerten will next play fourth-seeded Alex Corretja, who battled back to beat Sergi Bruguera, the man who lost to Kuerten in last year's French Open final, 6-7 (0-7), 6-4, 6-3.

Corretja, who was at least a break down in each set, rallied in a close and often spectacular match against the fellow Spaniard that lasted two hours and 24 minutes, converting his sixth match point.

Bruguera, the 1993 and 1994 French Open champion, and Corretja both played two matches

Thursday and Corretja played six sets.

Muster, French Open champion in 1995, routed German qualifier Jens Knippschild 6-1, 6-4 in 53 minutes.

"If I keep playing well, I feel I can win the tournament. I am getting pretty close to my best shape with each match," said Muster, a former No. 1 who has now slipped to No. 25.

Muster, seeking his first clay-court title since November 1996, is in the quarterfinals of this Super 9 tournament for the first time.

In a battle between two Spanish clay-court specialists, ninth-seeded Felix Mantilla staged an amazing comeback to outlast eighth-seeded Alberto Berasategui 1-6, 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-4).

Berasategui wasted 13 match points as he squandered a 5-1 lead in the second set. Mantilla, runner-up last year, took two injury timeouts to treat back problems.

Chang, seeded 11th, lost 6-3, 6-7 (4-7), 6-2 to

Francisco Clavet in a second-round match.

Wayne Ferreira, the unseeded South African who had upset top-seeded Marcelo Rios on Wednesday, lost 6-3, 6-3 to Albert Costa in the third round. Costa will next meet Fabrice Santoro, who ousted seventh-seeded Richard Krajicek 7-5, 7-6 (7-3).

Karol Kucera, the sixth-seeded Slovak who was one of the players who had to play twice Thursday, lost a total of seven games in advancing to a quarterfinal clash with Muster. Kucera beat Clavet 6-2, 6-2 in the third round.

Goran Ivanisevic, seed No. 16, beat second-seeded Greg Rusedski 6-4, 6-2 in a battle between two of the fastest servers in the game. Ivanisevic, who brought his career record against Rusedski to 8-0, will next play Mantilla.

Frequent rain delays had caused a backlog in the schedule, resulting in double shifts for several players.

England's heroes make all-time European team

NEW YORK (AP) — England's 1966 World Cup heroes Bobby Moore and Sir Bobby Charlton were named on Thursday as members of the greatest-ever European team.

Some 130 journalists from across the continent voted for the only Englishman to lift the Jules Rimet trophy and the man whose semi-final double against Portugal allowed Sir Alf Ramsey's England to reach the famous showdown with West Germany.

Fellow 1966 hero Gordon Banks missed out on a place in the team, edged out by Russia's legendary goalkeeper Lev Yashin, while Jimmy Greaves, Denis Law, George Best and Duncan Edwards were also among those who failed to gain selection.

But Moore and Charlton were joined in the side by their 1966 opponents Franz Beckenbauer, who topped the voting with 85 per cent, and Eusebio, Hungary's magical Ferenc Puskas and the epitome of total football, Johan Cruyff.

Also named is former French star Michael Platini, co-president of the 1998 World Cup organising committee.

All the players will go forward into the final global poll of football writers to see if they earn a place in Mastercard's World Football Team of the 20th Century.

Members of the European select will be competing with teams picked from the other continents, with South America represented by players including Pele, Alfredo Di Stefano and Diego Maradona. Cameroon's Roger Milla is part of the African side, with somersaulting Mexican Hugo Sanchez in the Central and North American team. Cha Bum Kun, the current South Korean coach, made the Asia/Oceania team.

The official line-up for the all-time world XI will be unveiled in Paris on June 9, 24 hours before Brazil kick off the defence of their World Cup trophy against Scotland.

Europe: Yashin (USSR), Beckenbauer (West Germany), Moore (England), P. Maldini (Italy), Baresi (Italy), Cruyff (Holland), Platini (France), B. Charlton (England), Eusebio (Portugal), Puskas (Hungary), Van Basten (Holland). South America: Filloi

(Argentina), Passarella (Argentina), Santos (Brazil), Figueroa (Chile), Carlos Alberto (Brazil), Maradona (Argentina), Di Stefano (Argentina), Rivelino (Brazil), Didi (Brazil), Pele (Brazil), Garrincha (Brazil).

CONCACAF (North America, Central America and Caribbean): Carbalal (Mexico), Balboa (USA), Yearwood (Hond), Wilson (Costa Rica), Ramirez (Mex), Gonzalez (Sal), Ramos (USA), Dely Valdes (Pan), Sanchez (Mex), Medford (Crc). Africa: Nkono

(Cameroon), Shehata (Egypt), Youssef (Egypt), Kunde (Cameroon), Mwepu (Zaire), Odegbami (Nigeria), Abega (Cameroon), Pele (Ghana), Pokou (Ivory Coast), Milla (Cameroon), Madjer (Algeria).

Asia/Oceania: Chow Chee Keong (Malaysia), Kim Ho Kon (South Korea), Ihara (Japan), Soh Chi Aum (Malaysia), Chen Chi Doi (Taiwan), Bagheri (Iran), Kim Joo Sang (South Korea), Majeed Abdullah (Saudi Arabia), Kamamoto (Japan), Azizi (Iran), Cha Bum Kun (South Korea).

Lens awaiting coronation, Cologne prepare to wave goodbye

PARIS (AFP) — It has been a long time coming — nine decades in fact — but little Lens stand on the threshold of greatness as they bid to capture their first ever French title on the final day of the season Saturday.

Lens lead Metz, who likewise have never lifted the championship trophy, by two points having set themselves up for glory with a 2-0 win in Metz six weeks ago.

Dany Leclercq's unsung northerners have come from mid-table obscurity last season to wipe the floor with the big clubs in recent weeks. And until last week's cup final defeat by Paris Saint Germain, Lens had blizzed their way to 11 wins in a dozen matches, scoring 29 goals against just six in the process.

And now a result at Auxerre will give them the title — their first ever honour — even if Metz beat Lyon on home ground.

"We have to forget about the Cup — that's yesterday's news," said Lens president Gervais Martel.

"I am sure we can take something positive from the disappointment we all felt after the PSG match," Martel said.

But Metz star striker Robert Pires, still unsure if his future lies at Metz, Marseille — or Arsenal — thinks Lens may just crack.

"The pressure has to be on them as one minute they were chasing the double and now they may end up with nothing," said Pires.

"But if they win at Auxerre they will deserve the title. They won at our place and that was the game we couldn't afford to lose."

Auxerre are battling for a UEFA Cup spot and so will be motivated to go all out for victory, but the same is true of Metz's opponents Lyon, who will not be giving up any favours.

Marseille, Monaco and Bordeaux are all assured of a UEFA Cup slot, while PSG will take their place in next

season's Cup Winners Cup, which they won in 1996.

PSG will be without Brazilian skipper Rai at relegated Chateauroux as he made his farewell appearance in the Cup final at the Stade de France and has gone home to a new chapter in his career with Sao Paulo.

Elsewhere, the battle is on to escape the third relegation place and Strasbourg must win at home to midtable Montpellier to ensure their top flight status.

Cannes are already down but a home win against Guingamp would take their Breton opponents down with them.

A Guingamp win could spell disaster for Rennes, a point ahead of them and who face Toulouse. Bastia meanwhile face Nantes in a midtable clash whose outcome is academic.

Nancy and Lorient are already promoted from division two and Sochaux hopes to join them at the expense of Lille and Troyes.

In Spain, the big question remains whether Real Madrid will miss out on second spot, following their

home defeat by Zaragoza last Monday.

Real could, of course, still reach the Champions League by beating Juventus in the European Cup final on May 20 in Amsterdam.

But coach Jupp Heynckes hopes to make doubly sure by having his men finish runners-up to champions Barcelona.

Second-placed Athletic Bilbao, who lead Real by one point, travel to Merida on Sunday looking to keep their own Champions League dream alive, while Real have a date at Barca's neighbours Espanyol 24 hours earlier.

Fourth-placed Real Sociedad pose another Basque challenge to Real, whom they trail by just one point. And that advantage could disappear if Sociedad beat Tenerife.

But with things so tight in the top five, Mallorca, with a win at Salamanca and Betis, with a win over Santander, could also find themselves second by Sunday night if their rivals slip up.

Barcelona will meanwhile hope to end the UEFA Cup

hopes of Atletico Madrid, who can still just bag a berth on the European boat.

At the other end of the table, SD Compostela, Merida and Oviedo are all struggling to avoid the drop, a fate which has long befell Sporting Gijon, who have managed just two wins all season.

In Italy, Turin is preparing for a party on Sunday night if Juventus win the Italian title.

A home win over Bologna will secure Juventus' third title in four years — the 25th in the club's history — although a draw could be enough.

Marcello Lippi's men lead Inter Milan by four points, with one game still to play after this weekend. If Inter don't score more points than Juventus on Sunday, the league title stays in Turin.

However, despite the comfortable margin of error, Lippi is anxious to wrap things up now — so as not to damage the team's European Cup chance.

Two years ago, Juventus won Europe's top competition in Rome. Last year, they

won the Italian league just a few days before having to defend that trophy against Borussia Dortmund, and it all went wrong.

The 3-1 defeat in Germany still burns, and this season's schedule is even worse — the Serie A ends on May 17 and the European Cup final with Real Madrid is only three days later on May 20.

Lippi said: "My players are all concentrating on the game with Bologna, and I hope they are good enough and fortunate enough to settle the championship there and then."

Bologna will almost certainly be overwhelmed by Juventus as Lippi's men surge forward in search of victory, although they will need to keep an eye on former crowd favourite Roberto Baggio.

Baggio knows full well that another good performance — and best of all a goal — might convince national coach Cesare Maldini to take him to the World Cup finals next month.

Inter are away to a Bari side fighting to stay in the Serie A.

Finally in Germany, Cologne prepare to wave goodbye to the Bundesliga as they face relegation for the first time.

Cologne must hope that two teams above them lose and also shoot a bundle of goals themselves against Bayer Leverkusen to bridge a hefty goal difference.

Champions Kaiserslautern travel to Hamburg, where they will receive the trophy and where 37-year-old veteran Andreas Brehme will play his final game before retirement.

Last season's title-winners Bayern Munich play Borussia Dortmund on the final day but there is little left to play for in what normally is a glamour fixture.

Bayern, who want to give Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni a worthy send-off in his final game in charge, are already assured of second spot.

Teens battle in Rome quarterfinals

ROME (AP) — Martina Hingis had it easy Thursday as she whipped Irina Spirela for the fifth straight time — but the world number one knows life will get more complicated starting Friday at the \$926,250 Italian Open.

The top seed hammered No. 10 Spirela from Romania 6-1, 6-2. The win puts the Swiss into a quarter-final against fellow teenage terror Anna Kournikova.

The 16-year-old Russian dispatched French Open winner Iva Majoli of Croatia with a comeback, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 in their third-round match at the Foro Italico.

Hingis was counting her blessings — for the moment. "Today was a really good match for me, it was easier than expected," she said. "But it won't be that way tomorrow against Kournikova. She's a tough player, and is getting better."

Hingis won the pair's previous battle in Australia, 6-4 in the third set. "She's going to become very good," said Hingis. "She has a fast, solid game."

Two more young threats advanced. They happen to be the fast-rising Williams sisters.

Serena Williams slammed the brakes on the five-year Italian Open success story of Cionchi Martinez, stunning the four-time Rome champion 6-2, 6-2.

The World No. 31 playing for her first time at the Foro Italico, will find her sister Venus waiting in the next round after the elder sibling scored a 6-1, 6-1 win over France's Alexandra Fusai.

Spain's Martinez, the losing Australian Open finalist to Hingis, ruled in Rome from 1993 through 1996, winning four straight titles. She was beaten in last year's trophy match on the red clay by Mary Pierce.

Serena Williams, who only appeared in the computer rankings last October as No. 453, now stands 31st and climbing.

"I played pretty strong," said Serena, 16, competing on the European clay for the first time in her short career. "It was a good match for me."

"I've played a lot of those in the Top Ten, but not her. I had nothing to lose. I don't know my ranking, but she's like No. 8, so it was good for me."

Williams expects her prowess on the European "dirt" to make giant strides — hopefully in time for a good showing at the French Open and beyond.

"I've not played on red clay until now. It's one of my favorite surfaces. I have to tell myself that. She added: "When I go to the Wimbledon I'll tell myself that grass is my favourite surface."

JOB VACANCIES

A leading Jordanian development organisation seeks candidates for the following positions:

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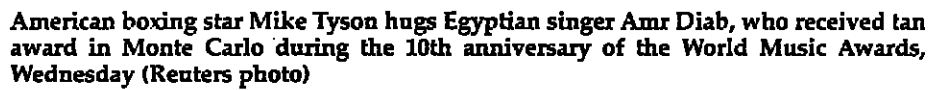
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WASHINGTON DC (AAMI) — In what is considered a significant milestone for the Arab American community, U.S. President Bill Clinton was the keynote speaker at the Arab-American National Leadership Conference's 1998 annual gala at the Grand Hyatt in Washington DC. Mr. Clinton is the first U.S. president to ever address an Arab American gathering in a conference.

Upon entering the ballroom, the president received a long standing ovation from hundreds of participants gathered at the Grand Hyatt. In his speech, he later said "I'm surprised, frankly, and also disappointed because the Arab American community has made an enormous contribution to our country." While commending Arab Americans on their commitment to family and education, he also shared a story of an Arab American high school friend who later became a successful physicist as an example of how Arab Americans have made inroads.

He later went on to describe his vision of race relations in America and how his initiatives in that arena have begun to bear fruits.

In reference to the stalled peace process, Mr. Clinton

reminded the audience that "difficult choices have been made, will have to be made by Palestinians and Israelis alike. And we cannot impose a solution." He further cautioned "but we must, we must help find a common ground to return to the dialogue."

Mr. Clinton continued by saying: "We have an opportunity to get this process moving again and to move forward." He added: "It has been my experience in life, and I have lived long enough now to see it, that in almost every area of human endeavour opportunities do not last forever. They must be seized. And I hope this one will be seized."

The Clinton visit was dubbed by many as a success for Jim Zogby's Arab American Institute and the Arab American Democrats. But some expressed dismay at the apparently cautious Mr. Clinton and the lack of reference to Palestinian self-determination, or "airport profiling" and "secret evidence" both of which have been introduced during the Clinton administration and have resulted in what many describe as significant erosion to Arab and Muslim American's civil liberties in the U.S.

While recognising the significance of the event, many Arab Americans were ambivalent in their reactions. Some called the president's visit "charity" while others hailed it as sign of better access and increasing influence for Arab Americans. "His heart is in the right place, but that's not helping much," said one Arab Americans activist. "One giant step for Arab America, one tiny step for Arabs," is how another participant summed it all up.

After the president's keynote address, Abdul Rahman Amoudi, former head of the American Muslim Council stood up and asked the president about the introduction of secret evidence to trials and airport profiling which targets travellers with Arabic and Muslim surnames and wardrobe. Nihad Awad, the president of the Council on American Muslim Relations, spoke privately with the president for a few minutes also raising similar issues.

Mr. Clinton continued for half an hour to shake hands with the crowds and answering questions before leaving. He was later followed by Reverend Jesse Jackson who is a long standing supporter of Jim Zogby and the Arab American Institute.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton's remarks supporting a Palestinian state had the White House scrambling Thursday to prevent the burgeoning controversy from pushing the Mideast peace talks over the brink.

"She was reflecting a personal view," spokeswoman Michael McCurry said after the first lady observed that a Palestinian state would be in the "long-term interest" of the Middle East.

U.S. President Bill Clinton's wife was speaking Wednesday through a satellite link to students from Israel, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Egypt and Jordan at a "Seeds of Peace" meeting in Switzerland.

She used the word "Palestine" and was then challenged by an Israeli student, who said: "Right now, this country does not exist."

"I think that it will be in the long-term interest of the Middle East for Palestine to be a state," Ms. Clinton replied.

"I think that the territory that the Palestinians currently inhabit and whatever additional territory they will obtain through the peace negotiations [should be considered]... a functioning modern state" in the general interest of peace in the region, she added.

Mr. McCurry insisted, however, that view was purely private and in no way reflected the administration's policy.

"She responds in a human, personal way when people express frustration," he said. "At the same time, the president is very precise in the way in which he addresses issues that are fundamentally important to the Middle East peace process."

The United States has refused to take a stand on the issue, insisting that any decision on statehood is a matter for Palestinians and Israelis to settle in the "final status" talks.

Mr. McCurry would not comment on whether the first lady was "in the doghouse," but quipped: "I doubt that she'll be venturing into the Middle East peace process any time soon."

Thursday, the Palestinians welcomed the first lady's remarks as a sign of U.S. support and said her view should be made official.

"[The remarks] are a sign of the growing understanding by the American people of the Palestinian cause despite Israeli propaganda," Ahmed Abdul Rahman, a top aide to Mr. Arafat, said in Gaza City.

In New York, the comments triggered an avalanche of criticism among Jewish organizations, elected officials and the media.

Malcolm Hoenlein of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, called the comments "particularly disturbing at this time."

A spokesman for New York Governor George Pataki said that "for one of America's leading government figures to seek to impose a Palestinian state on the borders of Israel is to act contrary to the interests of America."

The New York Post trumpeted the news with the front page headline: "Hillary Sparks Israeli Furor — She Sides with Arafat on Palestinian State."

Mr. McCurry dismissed the furor, however, noting that Mr. Clinton has strong support in the Jewish community. "He is considered to be, and he is, one of the most stalwart supporters of the state of Israel has ever had," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu reacted mildly to the comments, saying: "It is no secret that I oppose a Palestinian state for the simple reason that we cannot be sure it will not be another Iran or another Iraq." It is equally naturally perfectly possible that people in Washington whom we know and respect might have a different view," he added on CNN.

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A group of more than 80 Americans arrived in Baghdad Friday to donate \$4 million worth of medicine to the Iraqi people.

The delegation, the largest group of Americans to visit Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf war, is headed by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark.

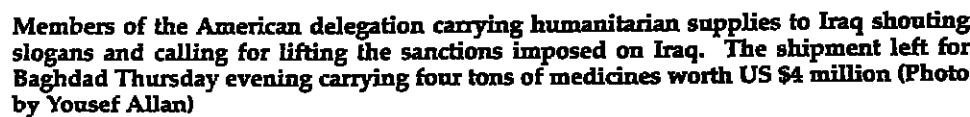
The group, which includes representatives of several U.S.-based humanitarian and religious groups, left for the Iraqi capital via the Syrian-Iraq border.

Thomas Gumbleton, a Roman Catholic bishop, said the mission to Iraq was aimed at "challenging the U.S.-spearheaded sanctions."

"We believe that they are illegal and immoral and that they are causing unnecessary suffering and death in Iraq," the Michigan-based bishop said.

"The American people are not aware of the impact of the sanctions. Therefore, we are bringing so many people here so we can go back and [relate] what is happening in Iraq," Bishop Gumbleton added.

"Sanctions are killing millions of people and children. We are against them and that is why we are bringing medicine with the delegation... which represents thousands of and thousands people across America irrespective of



religion.”

Manzoor Ghori, a representative of the American Muslims for Global Peace and Justice, said: “We want to lift the embargo now, that is our challenge.

“We believe that the sanctions are illegal and against the Geneva convention. That is why we want to challenge the American law,” added Mr. Ghori.

“We would like to mobilise support from all over the world, especially those who are against the sanctions, which are illegal and killing people,” he said.

Reverend Lucius Walker, director of the Inter-religious Foundation, said his New Jersey-based group was opposed to sanctions anywhere in the world.

“In our case, we have, for some years, challenged the U.S. sanctions and embargoes against Cuba, Nicaragua and other countries in the world,” Rev. Walker said.

“We represent the goodwill of hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens who feel outraged over the government’s policy,” he added.

The reverend stated that U.S. propaganda, misinformation and lack of information are aimed at keeping the American public “in the dark and uninformed.”

“This delegation represents a major departure from that policy. We have now new ambassadors who are able to carry the message to the U.S. public,” he added.

Last week, representatives from the humanitarian group, Americans sent more than 35 tonnes of aid, consisting of mostly medicine to Iraq, following U.S. President Bill Clinton’s approval.

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. intelligence services have a huge gap in their information about Iraq, a failing revealed during the recent show-down over U.N. armament inspectors, according to a report released to the U.S. Congress Thursday. The report by the U.S. House Select committee on Intelligence says the crisis over Baghdad's earlier refusal to allow the inspectors access to "presidential sites" demonstrated "how much at risk, and how ill-prepared, we are."

Did we have a policy, and did we have the intelligence that would not only support a policy decision and its implementation, but would also provide the information necessary to develop options?" the report asks rhetorically. "Regarding the latter, the answer was a resounding 'no,'" says the report.

The report also cites a breach made by "hackers" in Pentagon computer security in February as evidence of U.S. vulnerability. Although the hackers had no hostile intentions, the incident proved that technology is the "Achilles' heel" of the U.S. government, the report says.

The report by the select committee chairman, Porter Goss, a former CIA officer, was presented to the U.S. House of Representatives in the budget debate for the country's 13 intelligence agencies.

These budgets are classified information, and the 1997 budget for the Central Intelligence Agency was revealed as \$26.7 billion only after a pressure group had recourse to freedom of information legislation.

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The top U.N. weapons inspector, Richard Butler, has agreed to add a Russian political adviser to his staff, U.N. officials said Thursday.

Russian diplomats identified the candidate as Nikita Zhukov, a Russian foreign ministry official, but did not immediately confirm the appointment.

Russian Ambassador Sergei Lavrov wrote on Apr. 23 to U.N. Special Commission chairman Richard Butler, an Australian diplomat, proposing the addition of a Russian political adviser.

Russia is sympathetic to Iraqi claims that UNSCOM is politically dominated by the United States and Britain, which take a hard line in the U.N. Security Council on Iraq.

Baghdad has argued that their influence would be diluted by the addition of staff more sympathetic to Iraqi positions.

Russia has endorsed Iraqi calls for UNSCOM's staff to be increased, and on Mar. 4 wrote to Mr. Butler proposing that he should appoint a Russian deputy chairman.

That proposal, which has been blocked by the United States in the Security Council, was apparently aimed at counter-balancing Mr. Butler's existing U.S. deputy, Charles Duelfer. Mr. Lavrov's latest proposal came after Mr. Butler agreed to a new French political adviser, French Foreign Ministry official Eric Fournier. Mr. Butler also has an Argentine political adviser, Gustavo Flaurin.

'Sudanese government detains 85 opposition supporters'

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The Sudanese military-based Islamist regime, has detained 83 opposition activists including two lawyers, the leader of a Sudanese lawyers' group said Thursday.

Alluding to the authorities, Ghazi Suleiman of the National Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (NARD), told journalists that the "forces of oppression and tyranny" had arrested lawyers Ali Al Sayyed and Khalid Abul Rus Thursday after searching their homes and offices.

The two men were then taken away to "an unknown destination". Mr. Suleiman said at a press conference, calling for the men's "immediate release". He said if the authorities refused to free the two, the NARD would alert international human rights groups and organise a "protest march" and a strike to secure their release.

NARD is one of the main internal opposition groups in Sudan. It is not part of the Democratic National Alliance which groups the exiled northern opposition and southern rebels.

Mr. Suleiman also said 83 other opposition activists had been arrested since the start on May 1 of a referendum on a new constitution. The results of the poll are due to be made public at the end of May.

He did not identify those held, but the opposition Muslim Brotherhood organisation said on Wednesday that one of its members, Ali Aba Saleh, an imam, had been detained for having criticised the draft constitution.

Mr. Suleiman said the draft "institutionalises oppression and tyranny".

The constitutional draft offers no explicit guarantees that multi-party politics will be restored, and is vague about what political groups will be authorised once the new constitution becomes law.

N. Korea threatens to restart suspect nuclear programme

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea Friday threatened to restart its suspected nuclear programme, accusing the United States of failing to keep its part of a 1994 accord to provide two new reactors.

The United States had "not taken practical steps to implement" the agreement, a North Korean foreign ministry spokesman was quoted as telling Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), monitored here.

"Therefore, our competent organ says that the DPRK [North Korea] should no longer lend an ear to the empty promise of the U.S. side, but open and readjust the frozen nuclear facilities and do everything on our own way," the spokesman said.

Following mounting suspicions that North Korea was making its own nuclear weapons, Washington signed an agreement with Pyongyang in 1994 in Geneva.

To defuse a tense standoff, the United States offered to supply two new reactors if the North dropped its programme suspected of producing nuclear weapons.

The Korean Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) was formed by Washington, Seoul and Tokyo to build two light-water reactors, estimated to cost about \$4.5 to \$5.5 billion.

Washington also agreed to supply North Korea with 50,000 tonnes of fuel oil annually until the 1,000-megawatt reactors are completed. Washington said it would pay for the fuel but not share the reactor costs.

A U.S. official recently said U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had raised concerns that North Korea could relaunch its programme when she met South Korean and Japanese leaders last week during an Asian tour.

The North's spokesman said the United States "should take practical steps to fulfil its obligations under the agreement as soon as possible. In case the U.S. repeats empty words, the consequences will be unpredictably grave."

A KEDO team is currently in North Korea. It is to return to Seoul Saturday.

The United States recently hinted it would consider contributing to the cost of the reactors if South Korea shared the U.S. burden of providing temporary oil.

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MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin Wednesday sent warm greetings to British Prime Minister Tony Blair on his 45th birthday. Yeltsin's office said. The message, shared with the press in Russian, began, "Dear Tony." It said the president "greatly appreciated his contribution to the dynamic development of Russian-British relations." Yeltsin wished Blair and his family "health, happiness and success," and closed with "Hugs."

OTTAWA (AP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton and Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien made a bet Thursday on the outcome of the National Hockey League playoff between the Washington Capitals and Ottawa Senators. The loser has to wear the winner's sweater at a journalistic photo opportunity.

CHRISTIANSTED (AP) — Michael Jackson, wearing his trademark black surgical mask in the tropical heat, hugged and signed autographs for fans during a business trip Thursday in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The pop star's visit to the Virgin Islands Casino Commission on the island of St. Croix attracted dozens of fans and prompted speculation that Jackson may be exploring the possibility of opening a hotel or theme park in the territory.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Former Republican senator and presidential candidate Robert Dole says he took part in trials for the relatively new impotence drug Viagra, and has no complaints. "I think it's an effective drug," Dole, 74, said in an interview with CNN's "Larry King Live" late Thursday. "There are many men out there — millions of men — who suffer from impotence and this may be the first step," Dole said. Viagra is sold as a pill that must be swallowed a full 60 minutes before sexual relations. The drug supposedly stimulates an erection.

NEW YORK (AP) — Skater Oksana Baiul has checked into rehab for a drinking problem. "This is a positive move for her and by her," spokesman Shelly Schultz said Thursday. "She's just focusing on her programme and we're not bothering her." The 20-year-old Baiul, who won gold at the 1994 Olympics, began treatment last week, Schultz said. He wouldn't disclose where the centre is located and said Baiul likely will remain there for a month.

LOS ANGELES (AEP)—Film director Tim Burton's biggest disappointment in his career, so far, is the one movie that people ask him the most about, "Ed Wood." The film won Martin Landau a slew of awards for playing Bela Lugosi, and Landau says: "We knew from the beginning it wasn't going to be a big hit. We clearly more people to see it. Wierdly it wasn't a commercial movie, and I'm sad that it didn't catch on, that's too bad. It's a very unusual movie, if Tim Burton hadn't have made that movie then no

Amman. King Hussein Minister of Education and Law, thanked Kuwait on Saturday for its commitment to help in the ceasefire since Gulf crisis. Mr. Fawaz said Jordan was forward to the release of a further seven prisoners granted amnesty last month by King Hussein. Fawaz, an Ahmad Al-Sabah, AR, Shiekh Jaber, a member of collaborating with the ceasefire in 1990. "The leader provided the Kuwaiti government," he said. "I think the Kuwaiti government is in a We look forward to the continuation related to the release of the rest of the prisoners and

By Tareq Ayoub
for Jordan Times

AMMAN — The security forces have arrested a series of car explosions in Amman in the past two weeks, a government official said Sunday.

The official was asked not to be identified in writing the alleged perpetrators because their number fears of suspicion are limited to these attacks, was stated by the authorities in the past weeks.

The official confirmed a report that a member of the Arabic Daily, Al Arabiyyah, which said that those involved in such are part of a "group with Islamic affiliation." The official declined to reveal details.

The Minister of Information, Nayef al-Nawaf, is expected to announce the names of

[illegible]

summit, said Mr. Clinton and the U.S. to Madeleine Albright had returned back to the region at Mr. Arafat's request in order to continue work on the peace initiative with the Palestinians, overcoming the differences that are not large. There are difficulties. At the differences that are difficult to overcome. Mr. Ross told the West Bank PNA officials that the meeting is not possible. Mr. Arafat told Mr. Ross that he had asked the PNA to attend the Monday summit. The PNA officials thought a Monday meeting in Washington is highly unlikely if the PNA is to persuade the Israelis to accept proposals on taking the peace process forward. Mr. Ross said he was to leave for Washington and attend the meeting Monday as planned. The PNA officials failed to reach an agreement with the Israelis. Mr. Arafat would have to be able to accept the PNA official position.

Netanyahu's son Dan Bar-Ilan said, Israel did not attend Washington's summit on Monday.

It is so short that it would be agreeable that an agreement be reached on meaning that the PNA is to accept the